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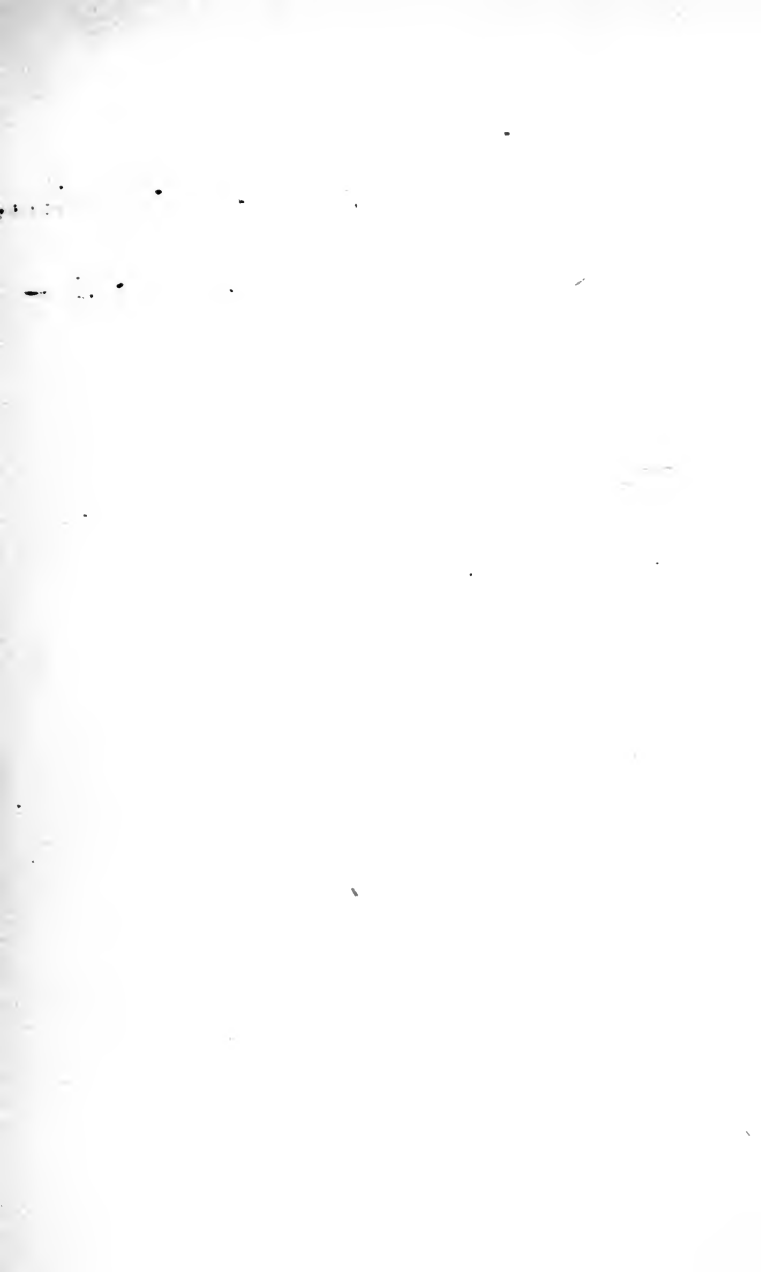
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Joseph A. Holmes
Ch. 152 -

THE NEW PRIEST

IN

CONCEPTION BAY.



THE NEW PRIEST

IN

CONCEPTION BAY.

[by Robert Traill Spence Lowell]

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THE NEW PRIEST

IN

CONCEPTION BAY.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MISS DARE'S EXPEDITION WITH AN ESCORT.

ISS Dare had made an appointment with Mr. Naughton, for a ride to Bay-Harbor, and he set himself immediately about securing a steed for his own use on the occasion, Agamemnon, (Dunk,) his own horse being lame. The Minister's he did not quite like to borrow. Mr. O'Rourke sent word, in answer to a verbal request, that "he would as soon take Mr. Naughton on his own back, as lend his horse;" and the exigency was met, at length, by the engagement of Jemmy Fitz-Simmons's white pony, whose regular rate of rentage was one dollar (five shillings, currency,) a day, and who certainly made an honest day's work of it, (that is, spent a fair working-day, or rather more about it,) when employed to go eight miles in one direction, or ten in the other. In consideration of Mr. Naughton's being a new customer, and of his being to ride with a lady, (who might very likely lead him into that extravagance again,) Jemmy offered the beast for the day at four shillings instead of five; and on the other hand, in accordance with

a message that Mr. Naughton had specially enjoined upon his messenger, undertook to have his pony in the best trim possible, for the intended expedition.

At half-past seven o'clock the next morning, there were present, at the rendezvous, the young lady, well-mounted, and the gentleman on foot, but with spurs on his heels, ready for the Fitz-Simmonian steed, when he should be astride of it. Though he had made this appointment, to take horse at the corner of the drung on which the worthy little Irishman lived, in order to save time, yet he had gallantly escorted Miss Dare from the door of her uncle's house.

"If Fitz-Simmons is at work putting spirit into his horse up to the very last minute, I don't know how much I shall see of you between this and Bay-Harbor," said she, as they got to the corner and found it unoccupied by man or beast.

The first appearance of the absentees was not at all as unpromising as might have been expected in accordance with a general and long-established public opinion. Jemmy brought up his horse, not at a trot, to be sure, (a gait such as men like,) but certainly at a palpable—a very palpable—canter; while he assured Mr. Naughton (lest that gentleman should be afraid of extravagant animation under him by-and-by,) that "he wouldn't make that free with any one, only his master." Thus encouraged, Mr. Naughton mounted, the creature bringing round his great white head and rubbing it, with a strong upward jerk, against the whole side of the future equestrian's clothes, on which this salutation left a greasy soil. That the animal's toilette had not been neglected, was evident, from the marks of the curry-comb imprinted durably in the discolored and highly-scented fur of one

side of him, which fur answered to the adhesive material in which it was mixed, much the same purpose that cow's hair is employed for in mortar.

"He didn't look so good as he felt," was the owner's assurance, who knew him best; and, having assisted at the mounting, the owner discreetly took himself away.

As the little beast had an inconvenient way of sidling up to any other quadruped who might be near enough for him to practise that manœuvre upon, the attempt was soon made to keep him in advance; but here he was so effectual an obstructive, getting always across the way, that the attempt to follow his leading was not kept up with that persistence with which men tie themselves to the lead of conservative (whig) statesmen, or submit to the blocking of a privileged "governing class," as the scandalous phrase now goes in England; the spirited horsewoman, with a dexterous cut of her whip, at the right time, took the place which belongs of property to the competent.

Now, with a horse like Miss Dare's (which was a good one) in advance, it must be a matter of compromise if the two companions were to keep company. Mr. Naughton, did, it may fairly be supposed, his best. He stuck his spurs into the pony's side; but from the effect produced it might be doubted whether the little beast had not the power of drawing in his nerves from the surface of his body, as a turtle draws in his claws. The rider procured a serviceable stick, to coöperate with his spurs, as a fleet combines operations with a land army; but the pommelling that he was obliged to bestow to produce a short-lived mitigation of the *vis inertiae* in which the creature moved, seemed so cruel, that he could not do justice to that method, by faithful practise of it. At times the pony cantered for five successive paces, but

the amount of progression secured in this way, was much what a table (before these days of table-tipping, of course,) could be made to accomplish by having its two legs at each end, alternately lifted and put down upon the ground.

Our horsewoman, accordingly, could hardly help getting nearly out of sight, now and then, though she waited duly for her escort, at convenient distances; occupying the interval for the first part of the way between Peterport Riverhead and Castle-Bay, with short visits at the doors of two or three houses, whose inmates she knew as being in the habit of bringing eggs or poultry, or some such little wares, to her uncle's, for sale.

Mr. Naughton had attempted conversation, most zealously, according to his slender opportunities; he had remarked upon the pleasant woodland smell, as they went along the way skirted with trees, where the young birches had come out beyond the limits of the little forest, like children playing at a short safe distance in front of their homes. Again,—after an interval,—on the summit of the hill, in Castle-Bay, whose side is precipitous to the water, and down the face of which the road goes as steeply, almost, as a waterfall, (or as Whitmonday Hill, in Peterport,) he had spoken of the lovely landscape, in which the breadth of Conception-Bay makes so great a part. Miss Dare's bright eye was not only open to all beauties of nature, but had found them out long ago, and grown familiar with them, and saw in them what nothing but a quick eye, practised, could have seen; and Mr. Naughton, as they paused, for a breathing-space, at this look-out, forgot his steed, and the difficulties of horsemanship; for with all his ecclesiology and fuss about tapers and altar-cloths, he had had his heart flashed into before now,

by burning eyes, and had not been regardless of becoming dress. There was his fair companion, with the flush of exercise in her cheek; her veil flowing out upon the wind; her hair slightly disengaged; her white forehead looking as unapproachable as one of the cliffs that hang over the sea in the British Channel; and her eyes, with a liquid lustre floating through them, like that which might roll its tide of light about in the fabled caves of the sea. Just now, as gazing more thoughtfully than usual, or, rather, more silently (for she always had thought enough) on the deep, she sat with lovely ease and grace, upon her horse, he might have felt as if a very special moment had come. There she was, all relieved against the sheer sky; and her lips, that had said so many witty and pretty things, silent.

"Miss Dare," he said, seizing the occasion.

"Beautiful!" said she, finishing with her landscape; and then, as she turned to him, "Why, what solemn exordium is that, Mr. Naughton? Are you going to decline going any further? Let's both get off and walk down this hill, and take a new start down there at the turn of the road. Shall we?"

Mr. Naughton's mind was surrounded and hindered by the building-materials, out of which he was putting together that slowest and hardest of constructions which men make of words with very little cement, and he could not, therefore, instantly get out of them; accordingly, though this proposal was a welcome one, as walking down the hill together would give him so much more of her society, yet she had dismounted, easily, before he was ready to ask for her horse's bridle-rein. He was not long, however, for his distance to the ground was very moderate, and his heart was vigorous.

"Don't you recollect the dog in the fable," she asked, "that had a piece of meat, but lost it, jumping for another?"

The gentleman had in his mind something a great deal more appropriate to the present occasion than that fable, (of which he did not see the exact reference, at such a moment;) he had what must be said, or the time for it would have gone by. It was a quotation; and as he went down, leading her horse, he got it forth.

"Ah! Miss Fanny, do you remember those lines of Burns: 'We've climbed life's hill together?'"

"Not quite that; but a good deal like it; 'thegither' is the pretty Scottish;—but do please attend to my fable, Mr. Magistrate, if you expect us to go down this hill, thegither; look to your Arabian courser, or you'll lose him."

Now, though it will never do to let one's self get into a ludicrous or awkward position in the eyes of a lady whom he values, yet there are different ways of escaping that ill-luck; sometimes by overbearing and putting down circumstances; sometimes by giving way to and following them; sometimes by taking dexterous advantage of them and turning them to account. Mr. Naughton's wit was in a sharpened state; he saw at once that he might just as well cast off his quotation and abandon it to the waters of oblivion; as to his horse, the creature wouldn't go, with all the appliances that he could bring to bear upon him, and could be recovered in half a minute.

"You'd better leave me Brutus," said Miss Dare, as the gentleman turned up the hill, holding her horse's rein; "I'll give him back to you, when you've got Fitz-Simmons." "Very good;" answered Mr. Naughton with a few hasty steps getting up with the pony. The little

beast was cropping such grass as the top of that picturesque hill sustained. He did not look round, or take his teeth off his food, but he quietly turned towards his late rider a part of his body which wore no bridle, and was unoccupied in eating.

Grecians and Romans often made great work of it when they fought, with their wives, and mothers, and beloved maidens looking on; but here was a fortress to be charged that could turn faster and better than a windmill, and bring a pair of ugly heels to the defence.

"He'll stand on his dignity now, after all that's been said and done to him, like the boy in Wednesbury church, that stopped the bellows, to show what part in the music he played," said the maiden, spectator of the contest of agility and skill, then and there going on.

"Woa!" cried Mr. Naughton, in a soothing and conciliatory tone, perfectly fair in war, and trying to get up beside the pony; but as the moon turns one face to the earth continually, and not another, so Jemmy Fitz Simmons's little horse seemed to follow the same laws of gravitation, offering always to the nobler animal the self-same part.

Mr. Naughton strove to settle this method of argument by a hearty thwack, which was very fairly administered. This manœuvre, like a shake of a kaleidoscope, brought about a new disposition of the pieces making our figure: the horse, snatching up his head, whirled round on his hind feet and began to go—not as might have been expected of a shrewd little fellow, that had often been through the same simple process of reasoning upon that point, towards home—in which direction grass was just as cheap and good at the wayside, and every step was away from a journey,—but down hill, though keeping the side

near the garden-rod fence. Mr. Naughton, with dignity, kept the road a little behind.

When the beast reached, as he soon did, a place where the road, being cut down, left himself on the top of a bank, he then turned round abruptly, and got himself beyond his pursuer in the other direction.

Any one who has been through this process of catching a slow-footed horse, with predilections for pasture, can fancy the further progress of the pursuer and pursued. The pony enacted to the best of his ability the part of the pretty little butterfly, leading on and eluding the boy; but on the other side of the hill from Miss Dare, several circumstances turned to the help of Mr. Naughton; he had left his dignity behind, within the young lady's sight, and, moreover, the road backward lay through the flakes, on which the women were already turning and spreading the fish, and while their being there took some nimbleness from his limbs, it also secured as many feet and hands as were needed for his purpose. The pony was at length caught on the beach, under a flake, with his face magnanimously towards the deep, and his left ankle hobbled with his bridle-rein, which he either could not or would not break. So he was recovered; but what time and possible opportunities had been lost! Mr. Naughton broke his substantial stick, not as an official breaks his staff of office, having no farther use for it, but in actual discharge of authority upon the offender.

Miss Dare was not where he had left her: having laughed heartily at the beginning and first steps of the chase, she had gently descended the hill; had leisurely mounted at a rock by the roadside, and was waiting at the little bridge (or perhaps it was a ford then) before you get to the long hill, down which comes now a later

way, and a less steep one, than that which alone crossed it in that day.

The view is a very fair one as you get to the highest level between Castle-Bay and Bay-Harbor. Upon the left, in the direction of the Barrens, the eye catches the sheen of more than one inland lake, and on the right hand and before you lies large and grand the Bay, with lightly-wooded ups and downs between—sometimes abrupt contrasts of height and hollow,—which are very picturesque.

The air on this bright day was clear and exhilarating, and Miss Dare and her horse alike found it difficult to accommodate themselves to the tardy pace of "Fitz," as Mr. Naughton's courser was by this time called. The gallant gentleman who bestrode this lagging steed, felt the awkwardness of his position, but could not make it any better. After a violent exertion of one arm and hand, and both legs and feet, to which the pony was an unwilling party, the effect produced was much as if he had been working a rude electrical machine; a nervous force was generated, which spent itself in three and a half spasmodic, cantering steps of the quadruped. This display of scientific manipulation, the horseman hesitated to exhibit before the unappreciative inhabitants of certain dwellings, that began to appear in the neighborhood of the Riverhead of Bay-Harbor, and still more in presence of the more frequent houses that fronted the road from that place onward, and therefore the latter half of the way from Castle-Bay was traversed with more leisurely dignity than the former.

"You left off at 'climbed life's hill thegither,'" said Miss Dare, prompting her companion in his unfinished part.

"Ah! yes, and I was going—if I hadn't"—

—"‘been interrupted,’" she supplied, "to the Roman Catholic Mission at Bay-Harbor."

Even in the midst of an apparent preoccupation of mind, Mr. Naughton was astonished.

"Yes, and on your business too. You remember how Deborah took Barak, son of Abinoam, with her, and how Sisera was delivered 'into the hand of a *woman*?'"

Whether by the suggestion of the last five words, or, however prompted, Mr. Naughton's interest even in the strange object of Miss Dare's visit to Bay-Harbor, was diverted to an object of his own.

There was one occult part of that Bay-Harbor road, with a bank to the left, and a fence and some firs to the right, a bend in front and a descent behind, where Mr. Naughton began to check his steed with the voice, and the steed began to stop.

"Why, what has happened to Fitz-Araby now, Mr. Magistrate?" inquired Miss Dare, reining up and turning her horse about; "has he dropped one of his legs, at last, in practising that very skilful pace?"

Mr. Naughton answered only indirectly, by repeating his request to his pony, soothingly,—

"Wo-o! wo-o! wo—o!" and stimulating him with his armed heels, looking, moreover, down towards the pony's left forefoot, assiduously.

In addition to the dilated monosyllable which had been hitherto applied to Fitz and counteracted by the spurs, the horseman must have drawn upon the bridle, for before coming up with the larger beast, the lesser stood still. The spurs were still actively employed, but with the rein exerted against them were inefficient to produce motion, and rather fastened the feet with intense

tenacity to the ground. Miss Dare witnessed every thing with a smile. Mr. Naughton's mind was not at all fettered and kept down to the circumstances by which it was temporarily surrounded, for he found his voice and spoke out of the midst of them, without any reference to Fitz, or rein, or spur.

"Oh!" said he, "if I could dare to hope that you would be persuaded to make the journey of life with me, Miss Dare"——

"Oh, no, Mr. Naughton, of course not," she said; "shall we go on to Bay-Harbor? We shall be companions so far, and back, if you please."

He loosed his tightened rein, applied, sadly, his stick and spurs, and in sadness which he could not hide, went forward. The answer was perhaps just the one best adapted to his case; but it did not take its specific effect immediately.

Father Terence was at home, and kind and courteous as usual. Miss Dare told him directly, that she wished his permission to ask a question at the Nunnery about the missing girl; and he wrote a note,—taking his time to it,—in which, as she requested,—he introduced her, without mentioning the object of her visit. He undertook the entertainment of Mr. Naughton, who was very grave and agitated, and whom, therefore, the kind-hearted man mistook for the father of the maiden, and tried to occupy about other things.

When Miss Dare came back from her interview with the nun, she found Father Terence showing Mr. Naughton as heartily and hospitably over "the grounds," as if there were a thousand acres of them, all waving with grain or larger growth, or carpeted with green herbs.

There was, indeed, a potato-garden, in dimensions

about forty feet by sixty, and as stony almost as a macadamized road, and a little patch of potato-onions, of which the worthy Priest was rather proud; there was a pigsty grunting, and squelching, and squeeling, with pigs of every size; and there were flocks of geese, and turkeys, and ducks, and hens, and chickens, which certainly gave a very cheerful and comfortable look to the premises, and warranted the proprietor's eloquence, which the young lady overheard as she drew near.

Father Terence, having learned, in answer to his question, that she had not found the missing girl, and had been informed that she was not with the nuns, met the information with a very emphatic

"How would they have her then? or would any Christians act that way?"

Miss Dare did not repeat to the Priest what she had said to the nun, and the kind-hearted man went on to say that he was glad she had come straight down and satisfied herself, for "people often took up notions that were not the thing at all, and Catholics were not all that bad that some Protestants thought them;" an assertion which, nobody who knew or even saw the speaker, would think of doubting. Miss Dare assented to it, cordially; Mr. Naughton, (who was very grave and silent,) with less animation than might have been expected.

The young lady was anxious to get away, and the old man, with a courtesy that was well-becoming to his years and character, escorted his guests towards the gate.

"I guess 'f any b'dy was goin' t' cut 'p a caper o' that sort, he'd leave Father O'Toole out," said a voice behind them, easily recognized by any one who had heard it before. Mr. Naughton had heard it before; and his gravity became rather grim, as he walked on regardless. Miss

Dare turned round, but no speaker was in sight, though the top of a hat was to be seen behind the fence, as if the occupier were sitting there, much at home.

"It's a merchant from Amerikya that's inquiring into the Catholic faith," said Father Terence, by way of explanation.

"Wall, 'm beginnin' to see through it, now, I b'lieve," said the mercantile scholar from over the sea, whose ears seemed to be good.

"Ye'll think better o' the Catholics after finding out this mistake," the Priest said, as he saw his visitors off.

Fitz-Simmons's pony might have been expected to go home at a much better rate than that which he had maintained during the ride to Bay-Harbor; but as if to convince his rider that it was not mere attachment to home that possessed his legs, he paced the street of the town much as he had paced it an hour ago. The magistrate, however, was another man; his stick was more effective; his spurs struck more sharply; and as Miss Dare, occupied with her thoughts, kept a very moderate gait, the young lady and her escort were not far asunder.

She tried to draw out her companion, as they rode along, but he was moody; and conversation was very unequally carried on. She dismissed him at her uncle's gate; and,—when he was out of sight,—went down to the Minister's; but the Minister was not at home:—

CHAPTER XXXII.

ACROSS THE BARRENS.

FOR, on the day before, intelligence had come to him, and this day, with Gilpin and Billy Bow, and Jesse in his company, (the latter leaving Isaac Maffen in charge of the funeral arrangements,) the Minister had followed its leading. His dog, like Tobit's, followed him.

It was an unsubstantial and broken story: that a man, going across the Barrens to Trinity Bay on the evening of Lucy's disappearance, had seen a young woman in white clothes at about a quarter of a mile's distance before him, going towards New-Harbor; and, on the evening of the next day, she, or a like person, had been seen at the Cove near New-Harbor.

This story did not agree with received theory; nor was it easily reconciled with known facts; but perhaps it could be reconciled with both theory and facts; and it was worth following.

The little nets that spiders spread were bright with dew, and so were the leaves of the sheep's laurel and other shrubs, and all the air was clear as air could be. It was not yet the time for sunrise, and our party left the sun to rise behind them, as they set forth eagerly from the place of meeting, which was at Dick McFinn's, where the road

through the woods and across the Barrens leaves Castle-Bay for New-Harbor.

McFinn "had heard nothing," he said, "but a small sketch, just, that was passed about from wan to another, in a manner, all round the Bay; he could not say was it true or no."

Just as they were leaving the place to follow the cross-road to the Barrens, Gilpin, whose eye was very quick, and never idle, called the Minister's attention to the road over which they had lately come.

"There's that noo priest, Father Ignatius, as they calls un," said he. "There's something wrong with un."

Mr. Wellon looked towards the Priest, who seemed to be walking slowly and thoughtfully; but who was so far off as to make it impossible to detect the expression of his face.

"This young Mr. Urston," continued Gilpin, "says there's a quarrel between Father Nicholas (they calls un) and this priest. Father Debree charges un wi' carrying off Skipper George's daughter, he thinks; and he says they weren't too good friends before.—I thinks he's too enlightened for 'em, or he wouldn't trouble himself about it."

"He might not approve of man-stealing, even if he believed all their doctrines," said Mr. Wellon, smiling, and setting forward.

"The old priest mayn't; but there isn't many like him.—Do you think this Father Debree used to be a Protestant, sir?"

"He may have been," said the Minister; "I don't know."

"So they says; and his father used to be a high man in St. John's. He hasn't met the lady, Mrs. Berry, since, from what I hears."

"You keep a pretty sharp look-out for your neighbors' doings," said Mr. Wellon.

"I've got into the way of it, I suppose ; but he might do her a good turn now, relation, or no relation. You heard these stories they got up about her, sir ?"

"No ; I know only what her letters from England say of her, and what she has told me herself. If you hear any thing against Mrs. Barrè, of any sort, you may contradict it on my authority ; she's a lady of the very highest character."

"Nobody 'll believe it except the Romans, sir ; and there's just where he ought to stop it, and might, if he would. We can kill it among Protestants fast enough."

—There is no house, unless of beasts or birds, between McFinn's and the other side.

So up the hill and through the woods,—where the trees of twenty or thirty feet in height look prematurely old with the long moss clinging to them,—our party went, at a strong, steady pace, and speculating among themselves, from time to time, of the lost maiden's fate.

Occasionally a bird started, before or beside them, and, once or twice, Jesse, who bore, beside his parcel containing food, a huge king's-arm, fired off,—gravely and sadly,—his cumbrous piece in the direction of the little fugitives, with no result unless to inspire confidence in the feathered inhabitants of the woods that weapons of that sort were rather used for pleasure than to do mischief with ; and to give the marksman himself occasion to philosophize on "the toughness they birds got with livun wild," as if they had received the whole charge of shot unharmed.

It is about six miles through these woods before getting to the wilderness, between them and those upon the

other side, bordering Trinity Bay. The wind was going upon its errand, in the same direction with themselves; it may have heard, somewhere, of Lucy; it may, somewhere, have taken in words of her own; it may, somewhere, have passed in its flight over the silent remains of her young beauty; but this wind goes on its own errand, and leaves them to their slow and toilsome search.

There was a feeling among the Newfoundlanders in Mr. Wellon's company, that, in a matter of this kind, the dog had instinct better than human sense; and so, whenever, with his nose to the earth, he left them for the woods at either side of the way, they watched his motions; and when he went a little farther in than usual, and was longer absent, they followed (one or other of them) to know what kept him. This feeling was most strong in Jesse, but was shared by Billy Bow; and Mr. Gilpin, smith and constable, was not free from it.

The Minister often turned upon his heel and lingered, swinging his stick over in his hand, or seating himself upon a stone by the wayside until they came up with him. He reminded and explained to them, that, though they must keep a good look-out, still they had not yet got to the starting-point of their real work; for they had nothing to go upon until they got over to the other side. The dog himself quietly abandoned these excursions soon,—very much as if he saw that he had unintentionally occasioned loss of time by them,—and, as long as the way was comparatively good, kept himself in front; and when it grew harder, fell behind and brought up the rear.

As they came out of the woods, down upon the first level of the Barrens, and saw beyond the little clump of trees that has advanced and gained a footing in the waste, the sun was high enough to bring the whole scene out in

all its wild and dreary sublimity. [We shall have to do with it again before our tale is out.]

There is a pretty little grassy valley just adjoining the boundary of this savage wilderness, in which are yellow lilies, irises, red roses, and altogether such a gathering of wild flowers as, in the contrast with the neighboring desolation, or even with the prevailing character of the land elsewhere, gives the place the look of cultivation. If they can only find something as bright to cheer them in their wide waste of fears !

At the first brook within the Barrens, and before you reach the outgrowing woods, they halted for their breakfast. Not far off to the right there is a little lake from which the streamlet flows ; the edge of this small sheet of water is white as snow with its natural bordering of stones, and over it are wheeling in the air and crying, like a woman or a child, gray or dark-white gulls and loös,* incessantly. Their cry seemed ominous.

The path beyond, reaching the little knoll of trees in half a mile or so, is already between bushes and dwarf trees, and rounded rocks or boulders, over and among which grows a stiff, strong moss. Berries are frequent everywhere ; but desolate, and more desolate, and most desolate, is the whole view out toward the horizon. Northward and southward from you, as you enter on the waste beyond the wooded knoll, until the sight is bounded by the far-off, many-colored hills, is a stretch of land scarce passable ; and for one who should get astray from the accustomed path, a trackless, hopeless desert.

Those hills, unknown to man, (as all the waste between is quite untrodden,) have a mysterious look ; but where is any promise, north or south, of safety to a hapless

* So called because they cry " Loo ! Loo ! "

wanderer outside of the line of bare guide-poles that mark this path? or where is hope of finding his dead body?

About mid-way, they met a man coming from the other side over to Conception Bay, and as he had some slight acquaintance with our smith, the two fell easily into conversation. This man had heard of the lost girl, and of the person seen upon the other side; and he had heard what they had not yet heard, that, at this very moment, a sick girl, answering to their description, was lying in a house over at the Cove,—two miles or so from New-Harbor. He thought her friends knew of it, but something hindered them from coming over.

“That’s a droll story,” said Gilpin, as he turned away from his Trinity-Bay acquaintance. “I don’t think it would be long that we’d have sat still, thinking about it, after we’d heard of it. Once, would have been enough, I think.”

Little likelihood as there seemed in the story, the Minister was not inclined to dismiss it summarily; he thought it possible that it had been taken for granted, as it often is in sickness, that intelligence had been carried, or had found its way to those who ought to know. He said “it was not very likely, but it was possible, and that was a good deal.”

Jesse seized on the story instantly, as one which gratified the appetite for something rather marvellous, and therefore seemed to him more probable than any simpler and more common-place solution of a strange and mysterious affair. Will Frank said, “there had bin amany strange things in this world; it was a strange thing that Lucy was not to be heard or sid, all of a sudden; and another strange thing, like what the Trinity-B’y-man

had just atold, might be true, too. He couldn' take it upon himself to say it wasn', surely." The constable thought "there was a better road leading to where she was than any in the Barrens;" but all went forward faster than before, to be resolved about this story.

They reach the woods upon the other side, toil through them, and come out upon the pretty shore and water of New-Harbor. A schooner was lying near a stage in front of Mr. Oldhame's premises, to the right; and there was a vessel of some size upon the ways, nearly ready for launching. From this last, the sound of caulkers' hammers, though not so fast and frequent as in some countries, came frequent; and towards that point, our party turned their steps.

They found the merchant overseeing operations at the new schooner, and ready to enter into their business, but unable to give any information. He said that he had not been able to hear any thing at all definite; that, certainly, a person might go through a place, and there might be no more trace left of him than of the way of a bird through the air, as the Bible said; but as to proof that could be depended upon, of any one's having seen any such girl as was described, he did not believe there was any.

The latest information which they had received,—that which had met them, namely, in the way,—had but discouraging reception here: Mr. Oldhame said that he had daily communication with the Cove, and many times a day; and, if there had really been any such person lying sick there, he must have heard of it. However, to make all sure, it was only necessary to ask among half a dozen men, from that place, who were at work upon the schooner.

These men, alas, knew only of old Mrs. Ayles, who had been bed-ridden for three years, that could be called sick, among their neighbors; they had heard that a girl from Conception Bay had been sick in New-Harbor, and that her friends had come and got her home.

So, among them all, then, this down of fleeting, unsubstantial hope was blown from one to another, and seemed scarce worth the following. Vain chase!

If it could have been narrowed down to this spot, and the roads or paths that lead from it, there would have been some end toward which to work, and limits to their labor; but if there should be nothing to connect the missing one with this place, then the whole waste, a little way from them, or, rather, the whole world, was open again; and the world is wide.

The merchant offered, heartily, to go about with them and make inquiries; and so he did. They went about in vain. They stood on the ground of the little mist, that, at first, and afar, had something the look of substance. If there were any thing in it, at least they could not find it.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, after refreshment at the hospitable Mr. Oldhame's, they started to go home; and as they trode, again, the same road through the woods, toward the wide, weary Barrens, the way seemed wearier than before.

Mr. Wellon, who followed, was going thoughtfully up the side of the first "gulch," when he was suddenly overtaken and addressed by a man, whom, on turning round, he saw to be Ladford.

"Why! what brings you over here?" asked the Minister.

"Same that drives a good many away from home:—fear!" said the former smuggler. "It wouldn't do for

me to come before the Justice, right or wrong.—It'll blow past in a day or two.—But, Mr. Wellon, *I KNOW where Skipper George's daughter is!* I thought it might be: *now, I KNOW it.*—I must tell it fast.—O' Monday night, between nine and ten, by the moon, I was over beyond the priests' place, there, at Bay-Harbor, looking at the back of that building they say is a nunnery. There was a light burning in one particular room, with just a white curtain down against the window. I was just thinking: 'there are no gratings on the window; but it seems to me, if I could only once see into that room, I should see where Lucy Barbury was kept.' Exactly at that very word, as the thought came into my mind, there was a sort of stir in the room, and the light veered, and there was a shadow on the curtain. I could see more than one woman,—in their nun's dress, I suppose it was;—and then there was a picture painted on that curtain, as clear as the lines of a cliff in the lightning: there was a woman this side and t'other, *and in the middle was Lucy Barbury*, just as plain as that fir-tree."

"What! Are you sure of your senses?"

"They've had thirty-six years of pretty good practice," said the smuggler.—"No, sir; there's no mistake: I see a thing, when I see it. It was as if they'd taken her out of bed, and had her in their arms; and there was her face—just the side of it—and the bend of her neck, and her lips open, as I've seen her for hours and hours, take it altogether, when I've sat and heard her read. The back of the house, and where I was, was pitch-dark; for the moon was afront, scarce rising; it couldn't have been plainer, and I wasn't a stone's throw off. It didn't last half a minute, perhaps, but it lasted long enough; and then I was startled, and came away. I've never told

a living soul,—not the men that were with me that night.”

“That’s a wonderful story!” answered the Minister, “but it confirms the suspicion.” So saying, he turned round in the direction of Bay-Harbor, while he was silently thinking. Then turning to Ladford, with the look of thought still upon his face, he asked, “What night was that?”

“Monday night, sir. I tried to see you that night, and again yesterday morning, and to-day I sent a letter.”

“I’m glad no one knows it,” said Mr. Wellon; “we must work silently, and when we’re ready, finish suddenly.”

“My secrets are pretty safe with me,” said the poor smuggler, smiling sadly; “if I wanted to tell them, I couldn’t.”

“It will be time enough for this, when we must have evidence,” said the clergyman.

“How far do you think my story would go?” asked Ladford.

“I think it must be good in law. You can swear to it?”

“Ay, sir: but *my* story?” asked Ladford again, with a long emphasis on the possessive pronoun. “Where am I to swear? What court could I testify in? or what magistrate could I go before, to make my affidavit?”

“The question of your credibility—”

“No, sir; no question of my credibility. Let me come near a court of justice, or even let it be known that I could testify, and there’ll be some one to get a noose round my neck, that I can’t slip. I ought to be gone, now, Mr. Wellon; Gilpin would have to take me.”

“We must take care of that,” said Mr. Wellon. “I won’t bring you into danger.”

“If I could save a life that’s worth so much more than mine—and George Barbury’s daughter,”—the smuggler answered; “if it was even by dangling in the air, like a reef-point;—but I wouldn’t throw away life for nothing, and least of all, just when I’ve set about using it to some good.”

There was nothing base in the poor man’s look, as Mr. Wellon now saw him; but to the Minister’s eye, there stood within that worthless raiment, and in the subject of that sad history, one for whom the world would be no equal ransom, and about whom, even now, there was melodious, joyful converse in the streets of that city, where “there is joy over one sinner that repenteth.”

Neither the constable nor any of the party turned back; and Mr. Wellon finished his short communication with Ladford, uninterrupted. It was not until they got near the knoll towards the other side of the Barrens, that he communicated to Gilpin the information he had received. Skipper Charlie expressed no surprise at hearing of Ladford’s whereabouts, but said of his news,—

“Well, he’s been away for some good; that puts us on the old track again, sir.”



CHAPTER XXXIII.

MISS FANNY DARE REPORTS.

THE next morning, Miss Dare came out from Mrs. Barrè's to the road, as the Minister was passing by; and, having saluted him, said, with a gay manner, which seemed to cost some effort,—

“What do you think of private theatricals, for a Christian woman, Mr. Wellon? and of my playing magistrate, as Portia played judge?”

Mr. Wellon was a minister, and stout enough to stand the shock of a woman's prettiness,—(and more than ever lovely was Miss Dare that day, for she had a tinge of color in her cheeks, and, in drawing her slight kerchief from her head, had disengaged some little locks of hair that did not know what to do with themselves;)—Mr. Wellon wore a little more gravity than usual, perhaps.

“I'm too dull to read your riddle,” said he; “will you interpret?”

“I will;—but first let me ask: Will you tell me,—how stands the case of our little Lucy, now? Do tell me if any thing is found out?”

“Not much,” said the Minister; “we only hope she's not dead; and have some suspicions of which way she went.”

“Ah!” she answered, in much the same tone as before, though, in the mean time, her interest about Skipper

George's daughter had, evidently, been most eager. "You're not quite ready to trust a woman; well, I'll tell you the result of *my* doings: I've entered the Convent at Bay-Harbor, under the protection of our Worshipful Stipendiary, who has such 'Catholic' propensities!"

The Minister was mystified.

—"That is, we have been down there in search of some trace of Lucy."

"Mr. *Naughton* and you?" exclaimed the Minister in astonishment.

"Yes; just Mr. *Naughton* and I; only,—if I may take that liberty with the rules,—I ought to say 'I and Mr. *Naughton*;' for, as I said, I was the magistrate, and he only what the Germans call the '*doppel=geher*'——the figure of the magistrate, at my side. *I* said and did."

"The Minister looked quite curious. "Perhaps we'd better go inside," said he.

"We'll go just off the road, here, if you please," said she, "and you shall sit upon that rock, and I'll stand before you, as good young people ought to stand before the Minister."

Mr. Wellon, smiling, was persuaded to her arrangement; and when this disposition was accomplished, she went on:—

"I got a note from the old priest, Father Terence, who is a kind old man, and saw the chief of the Sisters, and asked her, point-blank,—while she was expecting me to propose to take the veil,—whether Lucy Barbury was there."

(The Minister was hearing, attentively.)

"Poor thing! she couldn't help being a woman, if she was a nun, and she couldn't keep her blood down; and so she stammered 'No!'"

"Did she?" asked the Minister.

"Yes; and I think, honestly and truly; and I'll tell you why I think so. I asked her, next, if Lucy had been there; and that time she didn't answer at all; and when she recovered herself, referred me to Father Nicholas for information."

"Did you see him?"

"Oh dear! no. I thought I could do without him; so, then, I and my double came away, leaving Father O'Toole to the society of a convert of his, whose voice came over the fence like a breath from the shores of the Great Republic. So, there is the report of my woman-work! Can you make any thing of it?"

The Minister sate, thoughtful.

"I hope I haven't done any harm," said she, at length, after waiting, in vain, for him to speak.

"Excuse me," said he; "I had lost myself;—Oh! yes, we can use it;—but," he added, "it's a dark thing, and we have to go very carefully, and, as you say," he added, smiling, "*wisely*.—The Priest knows, of course; and Mr. Naughton?"

"The Priest knows that I did not find her, and rejoiced that I was 'satisfied,' as he supposed I was."

"And Mr. Naughton?"

"He only knows what the Priest knows; perhaps not that; for his mind seemed to be otherwise occupied while Father Terence and I were talking; and, all the way home, he never referred to it."

That little rogue, Fanny Dare! talking so coolly of Mr. Naughton's mind being occupied; and how does she suppose it was occupied?

"That's good!" exclaimed the Minister. "He needn't know it, yet."

"No, poor man! He knows nothing about it," said Fanny Dare.

The Minister smiled; "You say 'poor man!' Is that the expression of a woman's sympathy because there is one point in which his curiosity hasn't been indulged?"

Fanny Dare slightly blushed—(she never had much color;)—she blushed a little, and smiled too. That *was* a little breaking-out of the woman, perhaps; but perhaps it was at some other thought associated with her equestrian companion than a thought of his ungratified curiosity.

"He doesn't know that I was really usurping his office. What will Justice say, if it gets the bandage off and sees what I've been doing!—But *would* you rather have a little woman in possession of that information?"

"Yes; since it's happened so:—"

"There's a man's qualification," interrupted she; and then, suddenly putting off her gay manner, said, "but are you willing to trust me a little farther, and tell me whether you think, as I did, that they've had her there, and have got her away?"

"I'm sure I'll trust you, if you'll please to count it a trust, and not speak of it; I *do* think she has been there. It's a sad mystery; but you may be sure that, with God's leave, we shall follow up, to the uttermost, every clue."

"And may God bring her back *as she went!*" said Fanny.

A figure appeared at a distance, upon the road, in the direction of Marchants' Cove.

"There comes Mr. Naughton, just as we were speaking of him," said Fanny, preparing to go, by throwing her little kerchief over her head:—"but I mustn't forget Mrs. Barrè, Mr. Wellon," she said, lingering, "do see her;

I'm sure she'll be glad of it, though she can't open her heart to the bottom."

"I saw her the other day," he answered, rising, "and will soon, again, although the press of this other sad business pushes me off from almost every thing else. How strong she seems!"

"But she's going through a great struggle," said Miss Dare.

The Minister went on his way down the harbor, and the young lady back to Mrs. Barrè's.

Mr. Wellon and the Magistrate, meeting half-way, exchanged a few words with one another, and then Mr. Naughton came on, while the Minister continued on his way. A sound of steps drew near, as of an approaching magistrate.

Presently, from among the shrubbery and creepers, Miss Dare's voice came in song; the air was much like that of "*Saw ye Johnnie comin'?*" adapted freely, and the words of her song were these:—

There goes Love! Now cut him clear,—
A weight about his neck—!
If he linger longer here,
Our ship will be a wreck.
Overboard! Overboard!
Down let him go!
In the Deep he may sleep,
Where the corals grow.

He said he'd woo the gentle Breeze,—
A bright tear in her eye;—
But she was false, or hard to please,
Or he has told a lie.
Overboard! Overboard!
Down in the sea
He may find a truer mind,
Where the mermaids be.

He sang us many a merry song,
While the breeze was kind;
But he has been lamenting long
The falseness of the Wind.
Overboard! Overboard!
Under the Wave
Let him sing, where smooth shells ring,
In the Ocean's cave.

He may struggle; he may weep;
We'll be stern and cold;
He will find, within the Deep,
More tears than can be told.
Overboard! Overboard!
We will float on:
We shall find a truer Wind
Now that he is gone."

The melody of that voice of hers was so sweet that it did seem as if the air would keep it up, and not lose it.

Mr. Naughton may have turned himself about; certainly he did not go by, up the road, that day.



CHAPTER XXXIV.

HIGH MASS, WHOSE "INTENTION" WAS FOR MR. BANGS,
AND A SERMON.

MR. BANGS remained at (and about) the Mission premises at Bay-Harbor. So fast had the convert advanced in his zeal (perhaps not yet in knowledge, which time would assure) that he had really never yet been present in a Roman Catholic Church, in the time of worship, except on one occasion, in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, "down in Fed'ral Street, 'n Boston, 'n' then he on'y had a chance to see some holy characters,—Bishops and so on, he supposed, with queer-lookin' caps on their heads,—may've ben pooty enough when they used to be the fashion—and crosses down their backs, and diff'rent colored clo'es on;—he couldn't git into a pew, for they were all chock-full of Irish pad—native Americans,—with pad-locks on the doors; and he had to come out b'fore meetin' was over." Mr. Bangs was, in short, "as fresh as a pun'kin 'th the rind on, day b'fore Thanksgiving," as he himself told Father Terence.

The reverend man, as we have intimated, felt a little awkward, sometimes, in dealing with his novel subject. The way of thinking, style of expression, temperament, of the American, were all strange to him, and he did not

quite know how to manage with a scholar of the sort. The very ease with which the sacred work went on occasionally perplexed him. Mr. Bangs described his progress as that of "a full team an' a horse to let;" and in different words, changing the figure, (for Mr. Bangs, though not as witty as Sheridan, perhaps, had his way of getting up beforehand little variations of the same saying or sentiment;) and he gave his excellent preceptor in holy things to understand that he "wanted to git right through, 's quick 's wus consistent."

We say that he kept *about* Bay-Harbor; for he did not, by any means, confine himself to the place of edification, but did "a little mite 'n the way o' huntin' up business," (especially among Father Terence's co-religionists,) for the purpose, as he said, of "keepin' up the circulation." He made excursions, therefore, far and near, returning, at intervals, to tilt his chair and talk with the reverend converter.

Father O'Toole had no thought of losing his hopeful pupil by throwing obstructions in his way to the truth, which might dishearten so brisk a man; and he only wished to do all things with that sober solemnity that suited his own feelings and the dignity of his character.

On the great occasion of public worship, which, as we have said, Father O'Toole had in prospect for the special benefit of Mr. Bangs, he spared no effort to have things as they ought to be. To be sure, he could not muster so strong a body of clergy as he would have liked, (for Father Nicholas had an engagement, and was out of the way; and none of the clergy from other stations happened to be in Bay-Harbor, as they sometimes were, and he could not well ask any one to come for the day,) but he made a good show of force notwithstanding. He man-

aged to have his sacristan, an acolyte, a couple of boys, and—a Master of Ceremonies ; and all in costume. This latter, it must be confessed, was not a clergyman, as, according to rule, he should be ; but he wore a surplice, and that is a good deal. The Master of Ceremonies,—where there are a dozen clergy or so, apt to forget some of the minute details of their performance,—is to know every thing and remember every thing, and be on the alert for every thing : when to bow, when to bend the knee, when to take the censer from the bearer, and give it to the celebrant and back again ; when the deacon is to go to the priest's left hand, and when he is to station himself behind him ; to take the pax from the subdeacon, and to give it to somebody else ; when the sacred ministers change places, and when they take off their caps, and when they put them on again ; when the deacon doffs the folded vestment and dons the stole, and when he puts off the stole again and puts on the folded chasuble, and so forth ; in short, where everybody is to go, stand, kneel, speak, be still, and twenty things beside, ingeniously contrived to give everybody something to do, and that something different from what his neighbor is engaged with.

Father O'Toole might have got along very well without such an official, and indeed, except that he was determined to go beyond himself, would not have thought of introducing one, any more than of inviting a cardinal over the water to help him ; however, he had one for this occasion, and drilled him to the best of his ability, beforehand. He gave the important functionary, also, a small paper to keep about him, on which the priest himself had written, in printing letters, some chief and principal directions and hints, for the information that he was to impart, and the signs that he was to make to himself, the Very Reverend Celebrant.

Supported by these accessory and inferior ministers, the worthy Priest came, very red and dignified, out of the sacristy, and proceeded to the choir, in orderly array, the organ (a hand-organ, left on trial in the place, with a view to its purchase) playing Handel's "Tantum, ergo." It was sometimes said of Father Terence, "that when he got his great looks on, the Governor reviewing the troops was a fool to um;" this day some thought that he outdid his Excellency and himself put together. He took the Holy Water at the sacristy door with less of honest "recollection" than was customary with him, and he put on his cap again, after that important ceremony, to march to the altar at the head of his troops, with the decided gesture of a Lieutenant-General or Field Marshal—I mean such an one as wears the uniform or bears the baton only in peaceful fields of trainings and evolution, and is competent to visit the Greenwich Pensioners or review the Honorable Artillery Company of London. So did Father O'Toole, on this great day, in the eyes of Mr. Bangs, who was favored with a most advantageous place for witnessing every thing.

The good priest went down, at the lowest step of the altar, with his white-robed flock of attendants about him, in successive alightings, like sea-gulls round one of our ponds in the Barrens. He went through his crossing and his *confiteor* and absolution as usual, except that, with the honest solemnity that he commonly carried into the confession of his sins and other solemn acts of worship, was mingled to-day a flurry, occasioned by his consciousness of the unusual complicatedness of his arrangements.

There was some blundering on the part of his subordinates, in bringing him the censer, and taking and giving the pax, and things of that kind. The master of cere-

monies got the candles put out when they should have been lighted, and so on ; but when he came into direct relation to the Priest himself, he was as inconvenient and obstructive as an unaccustomed sword, getting between its wearer's legs. The Church, with a wise appreciation of its children, treats them as children ought to be treated—leaves to their memories such weightier matters as the degree of inclination—viz : “ moderate ” or “ profound,”—and to be sure and cross the right thumb over the left, when one stands, *junctis manibus*, at the altar, and so forth ; but how to find his book, or take it, or know where to read in it, she does not expect of the priest, but commits to the memory of the master of ceremonies, when there is one.

The prompter was always inclined to keep at the most respectful distance, except that once he rushed zealously to the celebrant's side, to assist him in rising, and planted his foot so dexterously on some part of the sacerdotal dress, as to counteract his own purpose and the best efforts of Father O'Toole. He proceeded, with the most excellent intentions, to take the book, at the proper time, and to point out the places ; but, in the first case, he got the edges of the leaves to the left hand, instead of the right,—(lamentable blunder!)—and, in correcting it, got the book upside down,—(a thing of less consequence) ;—in the second case, he pointed out, with the most zealous hand, the wrong place, and turned the leaves at the wrong time.

In short, the day being warm, and the congregation large, and Mr. Bangs's spiritual welfare depending upon the performance, the worthy priest was hot and flustered, before he had half finished his morning's work, and his attendants were in a state of confusion and depression,

which made them bow when they ought to have made genuflexion, (and that on both knees,) and kept them sitting when they ought to have been on their feet.

On the other hand, the organ turned and gave its sounds, and the singers sang, sometimes unaccompanied, and sometimes in concert with the instrument, lustily.

It was not a part of Father O'Toole's usual practice to have a sermon; indeed, the current report of him was that he was a "tarrible larn'd man entirely, and, *on that account*,"—(singular effect of a cause!)"—"had been recommended by his spiritual superior not to preach." He was satisfied with offering up the "August, Unbloody Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead," and seldom said a word outside of the Ordo and Canon, except to publish banns and give notices. He was not in the habit of denouncing from the Altar—kindly man!—either his Protestant neighbors or backsliders of his own.

On this day, he felt called upon to stir up the gift that was in him, and deliver himself of a message. His text was in Psalms, lxvii. 32: *Æthiopia præveniet manus ejus Deo. Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God.* From these words of Holy Writ, he proceeded to establish the following points,—though he did not divide his discourse into any heads: First, that there was only one church, and the Pope was the head of it, as a necessary consequence; second, that the Mass was beneficial to the dead and the living, by reason that both of those classes of men could secure indulgences for every mass; third, that Latin was the language for the mass, as any man could see by listening to the words of the text; fourth, that the glorious Mother of God was rapidly gaining that preëminence that the whole world, as well as Aythiopia, would soon give up to her; fifth, that convents

were not bad, and no good Catholic would think of forcing any one to go into a convent, Catholic or Protestant, (upon this he dwelt longest;) sixth, that confession was not that bad thing that was represented, but was a great stimulus to the soul to keep it down, and was it not a great convenience for paying the dues, twice in the year?

Having thus exhausted the subject, argumentatively, he proceeded to a practical application of it. He said he need not be telling his audience how long ago those words were spoken, for they would not be able to recollect it; nor where Aythiopia was, because not one of them knew, most likely. (At this point, he remembered that Mr. Bangs possessed a good deal of general information, and cast a rather uneasy glance at him. The latter, beginning, in a low voice, to "bound" the country in question, was put to silence by certain truculent looks, and other more threatening demonstrations, on the part of some of his neighbors.)

The reverend preacher went on, immediately, to say that there was another country they had heard of, whose name ended also in A, and began with the same letter, mostly, as that in the text, which was beginning to stretch forth her hands to God and the Church; that converts were beginning to come in, as would soon be seen;—(some of Mr. Bangs's neighbors here looked dubiously at him, taking pains to see him fairly down to his feet;)—that St. Patrick was the great converter,—under the Empress of the Universe,—(in which connection, he digressed a little to prove that that great man was an Irishman, and not a Frenchman, much less a Scotsman,—this argument, perhaps, might better have had its place among the logical deductions from the text, than in the

application, but did not come amiss where it was ;)—that the country he spoke of, resembled that mentioned in the text in another respect, as having a great number of black men in it,—though there were many that might properly be called white.

Finally, he applied his exhortation closely, by reproving many of his hearers, who were imperfect Catholics, for being too soon for stretching out their hands to shile-laghs, and the like, much as if they were brute bastes, instead of Catholics; and he hoped they would sooner stretch out their hands to God. So effective was this latter part of the discourse, that not a few of the congregation, after the manner of their race, made a public exhibition of themselves, by way of hiding from the pastoral eye, and the censorious looks of neighbors. Mr. Bangs, during these last sentences, had sunk his head upon the back of the seat before him, and made an occasional noise, which the good-natured speaker, and other indulgent persons, took to be the sound of a choking, by excess of feeling. Some, indeed, thought that the American had gone to sleep.—The sound may have been one still less appropriate.—We leave the question to the discrimination of the reader; only saying, further, that Mr. Bangs confessed, afterwards, that “it was pleggy close in there, fact, an’ consid’r’ble ’f a smell ’f incense an’ tobacco, an’ what not.”

It was an evidence of the ease with which a public speaker is misunderstood, that some of the audience, after going out,—although one would think that the reference to America had been sufficiently explicit, capped, as it was, by the allusion to the slaves,—yet some of the more literary of the audience, standing at corners, drew the conclusion, from what they had heard, that, as *Aythiopia* and *Ayrin* began with the same letters, the latter was soon

to throw off the bloody English yoke, and set her foot on the proud, heretical tyrant's throat.

The excellent priest, when all was done, had recovered his habitual kindly equanimity, and, instead of looking vain or conceited after the display of reason and rhetoric that had just come from him, honestly took upon him a double share of humility, which ought to have disarmed hostile criticism of his sermon, had there been any such. He felt satisfied and comfortable now, having felt his own force, and made proof of his priesthood. Cordially he saluted his ministers, on his return to the sacristy, made a hearty bow to the cross, and, without taking off his vestments, fell earnestly down upon his knees, and made his thanksgiving.

Mr. Bangs was recovered, after all was done, through the sacristan, who found him in front of the scene of the late holy operations, guessing about it, to himself.

Father Terence, in the interview that followed, was full of a comfortable confidence that what had been done had not been done in vain for the American's good; and was assured in this feeling by the latter acknowledging that, after what he had seen and heard, he had not a word to say. He helped Mr. Bangs to a correct appreciation of the whole, by supplying information on several parts, and, among others, he explained to him that *white* was the color appropriated to festivals of Our Lord, Our Lady, and saints not martyrs; that, for seasons of penitence and others, different colors were appropriate.

Mr. Bangs being anxious to know the penitential color, and being told that it was *violet*, explained his curiosity by saying that "he had heard tell of folks lookin' blue, and *had* thought, likely, that was where it come from." His next remark was more to his credit: he "presumed

that violet come from violatin' our dooty, most likely." Father Terence complimented him on the derivation, saying that it "had not occurred to himself,—or, indeed, he'd forgotten it, having that much on his mind,—but, indeed, it was much that way that the word sea, in Latin, came from *maris stella*, (that's Maria, of course,) because she's the queen of it; and it was a good offer at a Catholic derivation."



CHAPTER XXXV.

THE GRAVEYARD MAKES STRANGE MEETINGS.

THE day appointed for the funeral of Granny Frank's remains came on. The dinner-bell at Mr. Worner's had rung some time ago ; and there had been flying for some hours, at half-way up the flagstaff near the church, the white cross on the red ground, which is the signal for divine service ; in this case, (half-hoisted,) of a funeral. The flagstaff stands at a good two or three minutes' walk from the church door, upon the highest point of the cliff that overhangs the water, at the height of a hundred and fifty or two hundred feet, from which the signal gleams out far and wide,—down harbor, up harbor, over to Indian Point. The rounded back of this cliff, landward, is like the round back of a breaker fixed forever ; and, at a musket-shot behind it, is another, whose upright front we see, stayed, in like manner, ere it broke. Between the two, half-way from each, passes the road,—as Israel's road through the Red Sea is sometimes painted,—between two mighty waves.

The flag went down, the funeral procession came along down the short hill beyond the church, with eight men bearers, and the children from the schools ; the rest being mostly women. It passed, like a long sigh, into the church door as the priest met it there, and disappeared.

At the same time, another scene was going on at the side, unnoticed, very likely, except to those who had a part in it.

The little road from Marchants' Cove comes steeply up into the main, just opposite the church-tower; and up this road Mr. Debree was coming from Mr. Dennis O'Rourke's house, which lies at its foot. He stopped at midway, seeing the funeral, and, having saluted it respectfully, stood still until it should have passed into the church.

Mrs. Barrè and little Mary were coming from the other quarter, (Frank's Cove,) hand in hand. They came to the point of meeting of the two roads, opposite the church-porch, just as the corpse went in, but did not join the company; and when the space was empty on which the mourners stood but now, still were the mother and the child on the same spot.

To little Mary the solemn tramp of children, and of elders, and the black pall, typifying the night which had closed a long day, shut out all other objects; and she held, with both her hands, the one her mother gave her, and looked in silence on the silent show.

When it was all gone by, the sadness had passed with it, and she came back to present life. The point at which she entered it again was here.

"How cold your hand is, dear mamma! Are you going to die?"

Her mother's hand must have been icy cold, for it was one of those moments, with her, when the blood is all wanted between the heart and brain. The Priest, whom she had sought and found, and by whom she had been cast off and put aside, who had met her little daughter in the path, and to whose hand she had sent the letter, was

standing but a hundred feet from her, on his way towards the spot where she had set herself. There is a point,—one chance in million millions,—where the wide wandering comet may meet a world and whelm it; (God will see to that;) but here was a point at which she *met* this Romish priest again. Drawing her child up against her knees, she turned, and in the middle of the way, stood, in gentle, sorrowing, noble womanhood, in front of Mr. De-bree, as he came up.

With her pale face, the dark hair coming smoothly down, and her full eye lighted with a soft brightness—her paleness, too, set off by her close black bonnet—she looked very handsome—ay, and more—as she stood there, drawing her child up against her knees; and this was one of the great times in life. It matters not for the surroundings; it may be Marathon to Miltiades, or Thermopylæ to Leonidas, or Basil to John Huss, or Worms to Luther, or a blind alley to the drunkard's daughter, or the plain, square-cornered city street for the deserted maiden, or as it was here.

The Priest came up, as pale as melting snow, straight up the hill, and, as if there were no other being in the world, or rather, as if he knew exactly who were there, he never looked at Mrs. Barrè or the child, but as he passed into the main road, bowed his face, all agonized, and said, as he had said in Mad Cove, "I cannot! I cannot!"

She did not wait there, but raising up her eyes in mute appeal to God, as if she had done her duty, and needed help and comfort, for her work had made her weary, she turned away, and, with a very hurrying step, went, as the funeral had gone, into the church.

Having risen from her private prayer, she had sate

down, and was composing herself to take a part in the most solemn service that was going forward. She rose—for they were singing—the children there all sing—“As soon as thou scatterest them they are even as a sleep and fade away, suddenly—.” It was very sweet and sad music, and Mrs. Barrè had fresh memories of losses; but suddenly, at that very word, to many a person’s astonishment in the church—for even at the burial-service many a one had seen her come and saw her now—she looked at either side of her; then all along the rows of children in the foremost seats, and then, laying down her Book, went softly and hurriedly out again, as she had come in.

This way and that way, on the outside, she gazed; but there was no sight of little Mary, of whom, as the reader has already fancied, she was in search.

“I sid ’er up i’ the churchyard, ma’am,” said a girl, who, happily, had not yet passed by, divining the mother’s thoughts and fears; and before the words were fairly said, the mother was gliding up the steep way to the place, (properly *grave-yard*, for it was not about the church.) A woman—one of those good-natured souls who can never see trouble without leaving every thing to help it—had been moved by her distracted looks, and had followed her distracted steps, but at a slower rate, and found her seated by the entrance of the yard, looking steadily and straight before her. The neighbor, (who was no other than Prudence Barbury,) said, “Shall I go fetch the little maid, ma’am? I see she, yonder, wi’ the praste, Mr. Debree, they calls un.”

To her astonishment and bewilderment,—connecting one thing with another,—the neighbor had her offer kindly declined.

“No, no, thank you; don’t call her,” said Mrs. Barrè.

How strange it was, that having missed her and sought for her, the mother should be satisfied when she had found her in such hands !

“ She’s brought him to my little boy’s grave,” said Mrs. Barrè, again.

“ Don’t ’ee want any thing, ma’am ? ” inquired the neighbor next ; and this offer was declined with so much feeling evidently crowding up behind the words, that the neighbor left wondering, for sympathy.

Thus she sate still ; Mary being inside the inclosure with the priest. How strange it must have been to her too, that while she herself was so far apart, the child had secured for herself the companionship of this man ! Truly, how blessed a thing it is that there are these children, in this evil and formal life, to break through, sometimes, and snatch with their sure and determined hands, flowers that for elders only blush and are fragrant within their safe garden-beds and borders !

Meantime there came up the steep hill the music of the hymn which here they sing, or used to sing, from the churchdoor up to the grave.

Up the steep drung with wattled fences on each side, securing the gardens of different owners, they climb and sing, pausing after each verse, and thus they reach the graveyard on the summit of the cliff or rocky hill, which, beginning nearly opposite the flagstaff cliff, goes down the harbor, sheltering the church from the north wind as it goes. The graveyard has but a single outlet, and, however it happened, so it was, that the funeral had filled that single passage, and passed, with the minister in his surplice at the head, into the humble, waste-looking place of burial, before Mr. Debree had left it. There were a few trees, here and there, as small as on the uninclosed

land beyond, and behind one of these the Romish priest had taken stand, and little Mary staid with him.

It is not to be supposed that so strange a visitor should pass unnoticed, altogether. There were some women in the company that could not keep their indignation down at the sight "of the like of him in their churchyard." They did not know how the service could go on until he had been "asked his manin."

The knowledge, however, that Mrs. Barrè, whose little daughter was in company with the obnoxious stranger, had joined the funeral procession, spread itself soon, and tended to quiet the irritation; the grave voice of Skipper George,—who, for his nephew's sake, was in the funeral train,—quelled it.

"N'y, friends," he said, turning round, in a pause of the singing, (and all were silent as he spoke,) "'e's a good gentleman ef 'e be a Roman itself. 'E's been proper feelun to me, sunce I've ahad my loss; an' 'e never meddled wi' my religion. It wasn' make believe, I knows well, by the feel."

The hymn went on, ending with the *Gloria Patri* as they reached the grave.

A good many eyes, during the sublime services at the open earth, turned toward the stranger very likely; but whosoever saw him, saw him respectfully standing, uncovered, like the persons immediately engaged in the burial.

By the time the office was ended, and the people began to turn upon their heels and set their caps to go to their several homes, and while it was asked "Why! didn't 'ee see un?" it was discovered that Mr. Debreë had been the first to leave the place, and was gone. In that quarter of the yard where he had been, the mother was seen,

with her recovered child, stooping over a grave smaller than that just filled, and some of the nearer by-standers (nearer, perhaps, not quite by accident,) overheard Mary saying that she "had showed him dear little brother's place." The general opinion expressed by one mouth and assented to by others, was to the effect that that foreign priest was to the speaker's "seemin," and to the general "seemin, a relation, someway—very like a brother; mubbe the lady was some o' they kind herself, once;" but then, that "he never took no notice to she," was admitted.

The little child was very still, while her mother, having risen, stood looking on the mound of earth which wore no greenness yet. She gave her mother time to make to herself again, out of that clay, a fair boy; and to fondle him with motherly hands, and deck him with his disused garments once again; or time to gather at this grave the memories of other sadnesses. Some of the female neighbors sought, meanwhile, to solve their question by asking little Mary, apart, "ef that praste—that strange gentleman—was her uncle," in vain; she did not know. The Minister, looking in that direction, said nothing to them, and left them to each other; and when all were gone away, except the eldest son of the last dead, Mrs. Barrè kissed the green sod, as little Mary also did, and they two, hand in hand, departed.

"I asked him to go up and see it, mamma," the child said, "and so he went, and he was very kind, and he cried; I saw him cry, only he didn't talk much, and I think he doesn't know how to lead little children by the hand, as Mr. Wellon does."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE MINISTER TRIES TO DO SOMETHING.

AS things stood, it appeared that, if any thing was to be done about Lucy Barbury, (to any purpose,) the Minister must set it going; for the Magistrate's operations were rather desultory, and without satisfactory result, or promise of it; and the magistrates from Bay-Harbor and elsewhere had only consulted and deputed one of their number to come to the spot and inquire and examine; and since his return from Peterport, (where he had gravely and dignifiedly walked about, and taken notes and compared them with Mr. Naughton's, and heard depositions of the father and such of the neighbors as knew nothing about it,) the magistracy had drawn in its head and claws, and left only the Peterport Stipendiary (shall we say its tail?) in action.

Yet now was the time to do, if any thing was to be done. A watch had been secretly kept up by trusty men (young Mr. Urston, Jesse, and many others in turn) about the Priest's premises in Bay-Harbor, from the afternoon in which Ladford's information had been received; but there ought to be a search there, immediately; and next, wherever else there might be occasion.

The difficulties in the way were very considerable, and even formidable;—one half of the population, at least,

in all parts of the island, belonged to the Roman Catholic Church;—a mere suspicion of their priests or religious persons would irritate and incense them; and an attempt to invade their premises, and violate the sacredness of convent-secrecy, and to hold a priest to trial, on a charge of felony, might provoke them to some violent extremity. Moreover, a clergyman was not the proper person to conduct and carry out the necessary measures; having, in the first place, no warrant of an official character and authority, and therefore not being qualified to work to the best advantage; and, in the next place, being specially obnoxious to the animosity of the Roman Catholics, and unshielded from its effects; and, besides, being very likely to involve the Church with himself in a feud. On the other hand, Mr. Wellon was an Englishman, as stout and healthy in heart and mind as in body; he was a thorough friend, and (what takes in every thing in one) he was a faithful pastor. Accordingly, he told Gilpin, “We can’t take care of consequences; we must make out what our duty is, and do it, to our very best, and leave what comes after to God.” He undertook, therefore, to do what he could find to do. For a few days he kept himself quiet in his place. Sunday and Monday came and went, and in these few days a few slight gains of information were made.

Young Urston (whom circumstances threw into such close association with the Protestants, and who, moreover, came to church) grew fast in Gilpin’s estimation, by the skill with which he had found out from the wife of one of the four oarsmen of the priest’s punt, (Micky Khosgrove,) that two females came in the boat from Bay-Harbor, and three went back—one sick. This sick person was said to be one of the two nuns who had come

from Bay-Harbor. They had landed at the Worrell, and came back shortly, one of them having been taken with a fit. The other nun and a stranger brought her down; —the boatmen had not left the punt.

No other information of any consequence was added to that already gained, except that the anonymous letter bringing Ladford into question, was written by one Tim Doyle, a zealous Roman Catholic, but not, it would appear, liable to any suspicion himself in connection with the unexplained disappearance. The letter had probably been prompted by mere religious zeal.

It could not be ascertained, in Peterport, that, on the memorable evening, any young woman had left it, or that any stranger Roman Catholic woman had been in it at all. The mystery, therefore, was not lighted.

Mr. Wellon began at the official in Bay-Harbor, who had come to Peterport, examining in the name of the larger magistracy. It was the Hon. Mr. Bride, a gentleman of quite an important rank in the colony. The merchant-magistrate of Bay-Harbor differed from the merchant-magistrate of Peterport, more in degree than in kind. He had seen the world; was a man of very good presence and manners; he listened to Mr. Wellon's statement patiently and courteously, but regretted that he did not see how he could take up the affair; said that authority ought to be had from one of the judges; and recommended the application to Judge Bearn, who was expected in Bay-Harbor in a day or two, and could furnish the necessary warrant. On the whole, it was rather an ugly-looking job, he thought, and feared that not much would be accomplished. He added, however, that "*he had met that new priest,—Debree,—and that he seemed anxious that something might be done.*"

From this active functionary, Mr. Wellon went as fast as he could get away, only requesting that the object of his visit might be kept strictly private, a request to which the magistrate replied, with dignity, that it was not his habit to speak of business except with those to whom it belonged.

The judge came, as was expected; and it was not long after his being settled at his lodgings, that Mr. Wellon made his way to him and secured an appointment for a private interview. At this, he went through his case, which the judge heard attentively, and without asking a question until the statement was ended; making notes and taking down the names of the different persons who could testify, and the nature of the evidence they could give. The Parson went over, with the judge, the arguments of probability. Judge Bearn was of opinion that the girl might have gone, of her own free will, but that she had not done so was argued by the fact that there had been no communication from her since,—a thing which the priests or “religious” having her under their control would have been anxious to have her make, rather than underlie the suspicion of a felony instead of a misdemeanor; then, that they had not carried her off *against* her will, he thought, because of the want of motive;—she was no heiress.

The Minister argued steadily; mentioned again young Urston’s relation to Lucy Barbury; his abandonment of the preparation for the priesthood; Mrs. Calloran’s character;—but his great argument was *the fact* that *she had been* at the nunnery. The judge showed him how the arguments of probability affected the fact: “A suspicion, on the whole unlikely, is to be established by what sort of evidence? You bring evidence to show (imperfectly,

but as far as it shows any thing) that the girl, whose intercourse with her lover had been broken up, of her own accord, (for she went alone, in a crazy fit, if you will,) went away from her father's house, and along a road that leads to her lover's door, and to the water-side; no previous concert, nor any meeting or understanding since, between the two young people, appears; (the young man's whole conduct and all the circumstances go against it;) that road leads by her lover's house to the water-side; the next day a cap belonging to her, and which had been worn by her on the day of her disappearance, is picked up on the shore; another article of dress is picked up from the water later. That case, as it stands, looks more like one of suicide in a fit of derangement, than any thing. Then you've got some other things to bring in: the prayer-book burned, and Mrs. Calloran's equivocations about it. Now, of these, you may suppose the book to have been in her hand, and dropped on her way to the fatal spot; and the woman's different stories, (if she had found it and wreaked her dislike upon it,) would not be very strange."

The Minister listened sadly to this presentment of the case, which had, no doubt, many a time forced itself upon him and been thrust out of his mind.

"Now, on the other hand," said the judge, "given, an old nurse of resolute character and a bigot to her faith, and a father fond of his son; both—granny and father—disappointed at the failure of cherished prospects of ambition for that young man; then, on the same side, an unscrupulous priest, having great and active talents, shut up in a little room; obsequious nuns; with a girl uncommonly gifted in mind and body coming across the religious prejudices and principles of all, and the interest

and cherished plans of some,—(I think I've put it strongly enough,)—if a chance offers, will they snatch this girl up, and keep her in durance? In your theory of what has been done, I believe you leave out the father of the young man, entirely, and begin at the granny, (*Dux fœmina facti*;) she, and the priest and the nuns, manage it among them. That is one supposition; another is (or may be) this:—

“The parties before mentioned,—of the first part, as we say,—old nurse of the young man, and his father, or, if you will leave out the father, the nurse and the priest, are conspirators with the girl, to bring her out of the Church to Popery; she runs away, at the first chance, in her sick-room clothes, and is secretly carried to the nunnery at Bay-Harbor.

“The first of these suppositions is possible, but unlikely; because, beside all kindly feelings, common sense would teach the Priest, if not the woman, that it's a troublesome, unprofitable, and dangerous business, keeping a live prisoner, and as dangerous letting one go. There have been cases of prisoners so kept, certainly; but they are so rare, as to deserve to be left out, in the consideration of probabilities.

“Then for the other supposition of the girl's having consented with them, appearances seem to me against it. There are cases enough of this sort; women are inveigled, and a priest can be found,—without looking,—to take her in, (Virgil, again, changing one letter, *confugium vocat: hoc prætexit nomine culpam*;) but they would let the parents and the world know, and could we in such a case suppose the lover likely to be ignorant?—You observe that I have yet made no account of the young lady's (Miss Dare's) information, nor of the American's, nor of

Ladford's, not because I think them of little consequence, for I think them very important, altogether, and Ladford's, and perhaps Bangs's, separately. Upon the character of these men rests the whole burden of proof:—it may be enough to make probable an improbable hypothesis.—I should be glad to see them.”

Mr. Wellon stated without reserve the case of his witnesses. “Mr. Bangs was making some religious inquiries in Bay-Harbor,” (at this the judge smiled,) “William Ladford was afraid to be known,” (the judge looked grave:) the Minister went on to speak of the tie which seemed to bind Ladford to Skipper George; of the irreproachable life that he had led, and his apparent penitence, the good esteem of his neighbors, and in short, so described him, that the judge became quite interested about him. “Let me ask,” said he, “(it shall do him no harm,) was he a smuggler?” (“Yes,” said Mr. Wellon.) “His name then is Warrener Lane; we’ve heard of him; his case is a good deal better than it used to look, for I noticed that his chief accuser, who was hung the other day, retracted his accusation of Lane; but he is in such a position, that not only he might be put to trouble himself, but his evidence could be thoroughly and irremediably impeached. Now I’ll think the whole thing over. You bring me these men, (will you?—Ladford, on my honor,—) to-morrow. I’ll determine after seeing and hearing them, and if the smuggler is the sort of man, we’ll get his pardon.”

Mr. Wellon thanked him heartily.

“By the way,” said the judge, “I don’t see any thing of the new priest in your affair;—Debree, I believe his name is now”——

“Do you know him?” asked the Minister.

"To be sure I do. I knew him from a boy, and a fine fellow he was. His father, you know, was a member of the Executive Council, formerly Lieutenant-Colonel in the army. This was his only son. Mrs. Neilson, and Mrs. Wilkie, and Mrs. Collins were his daughters. This young man went to Oxford and afterwards took orders. He then went to the West Indies and married there, I believe, had a fortune left him by his mother's brother, dropped part of his name, and then—I never heard how,—changed his faith. I think his wife must have died there.—That young fellow was one of the noblest beings, years ago, that I ever knew."

The Minister sighed deeply, and said that Father De-bree was already much beloved in Peterport.

The next day Mr. Bangs, having been intercepted in one of his business tours by the secret guard, consented to come to the judge's lodgings, privately, and, being there, went through his examination. His way of getting to a succinct mode of speaking was this:—

Q. "Were you near Mr. Urston's house on the evening of the Fifteenth instant?"

A. "Wall, as far's I can be sure o' my pers'nal ident'ty, I guess I was."

Q. "Please to answer directly to the question. Were you?"

A. "Wall, I guess I wa'n't far off."

Q. "Once more; Were you?"

A. *with a smile*, "I was." So on, about the women that night, and the nunnery and all. He was desired to wait after his interview with the judge.

Ladford, very humbly and most intelligently, gave his statement. The judge drew him out a good deal in a kind way, and the man let himself be drawn out.

When he heard of the pardon, he said with tears, "Thank God! That's the 'one other thing' besides finding Skipper George's daughter, that I spoke to you about, Mr. Wellon, t'other day. I should like to die a free man."

The end of all was that the judge said,—

"The warrant will be in the hands of the deputy sheriff in half an hour; he'll execute it as soon as he can, conveniently and quietly. You must get this Mr. Bangs safely out of the way till the evening, that he may not put them on their guard."

On coming out, Mr. Wellon was sounding the American, when the latter turned round and said,—

"Look a' here, Mr. Wellon; you want to know if I'll keep still 'bout the judge, and what not. Yes—I guess I will. 'Twun't touch Father O'Toole."



CHAPTER XXXVII.

A STATION AT HENRAN'S INN.

FATHER DEBREE had celebrated mass and vespers on Sunday, in the unfinished chapel at Castle-Bay, and had given notice of a station to be held at Michael Henran's public-house in Peterport, on Wednesday following, in the afternoon.

This inn stands opposite Beachy-Cove, on the other side of the road from Mrs. Barrè's, and on a good deal higher ground.

A straight drung goes up from the road into an open space about the house, a moderate-sized building, long for its thickness, painted white some years ago, and looking well enough adapted for the inn of such a place. For hospitable purposes it has a room down stairs (beside that occupied by the cobbler—nay, shoemaker,)—and two rooms on the next floor also.

The inn fronts nearly south, like almost all the houses, and has a door in front with a smooth stone before it, and a door at the east end, that looks "down harbor." There is a southward view (over the little grove of firs, fenced in on the other side of the road) to Sandy Harbor; the upper part of that harbor, Wantful, being alone seen over the rocky ridge, which like that of Peterport grows higher as it goes down toward the Bay.

Beyond this nearest tongue of land (and rock) may be seen others, though not divided to the eye at this height, by water, and far off the southern border of Conception-Bay, beautiful in its silent rocky strength and varied outline. Inland, again, lie mysterious-looking, many-colored mountains of broken rock, shaded with deep crevices perhaps, or with the dark-green "Vars"* and other never-changing forest-trees.

The scenery, at the time of which we write, was overhung and hung around with far-off heaped clouds, turned up and flecked with crimson, with the bright red of the furnace and the pale red of the shell, grandly and gorgeously as ever clouds were painted under any sky. It is a sort of scenery,—this of a splendid summer's sunset,—which by its drawing out the eye toward the horizon and upward toward the sky, stretches the mind as well, (it may be backward to memories far left behind; it may be forward to far hopes, or thoughts of things beyond this earth and this earth's life,) and gives to all minds, unless insensible to such influences, a tendency to mysterious musing.

A little company had gathered round the inn, before the time, and had been here waiting ever since, while the afternoon had passed away. The priest had not come. The foremost were a number of old women, adjusting every now and then some difficulty of slight character, as one might judge, and some of them grumbling in a low voice.

Behind these elders and among them were an old man or two, then some young women, very silent, for the most part; some of them looking quite absorbed and earnest, one or two whispering and perhaps discussing the ap-

* Firs.

pearance or the character of a companion, or of the veterans in front, and one or two of them occasionally mischievous in joking "practically," as the phrase goes, pulling a shawl or ribbon for example, or inflicting sudden pinches unobserved. Below again,—about the door, inside and outside,—were a man or two, reserved and meditative, smoking a pipe apart, or leaning silently against the door, or on the fence outside ; and many younger men talking together in low tones and passing homely jokes on one another.

At length there was a sudden change of state among these little groups ; the priest passed through them, hastily, explaining and apologizing for his being late. Then the noise of feet that, when restrained and tutored, only made noise the more methodically, succeeded to the other sounds, and the whole company soon disappeared above.

The office of Vespers passed, in English ; and afterward, the congregation having gone out, the priest seated himself near the table on which the crucifix was standing and the candles burning, and beside the open doorway leading from the larger front room to a smaller one behind.

Mr. Duggan, the clerk, sat at the opposite side of the large room, reading in a low voice, (perhaps the VII Penitential Psalms.)

Presently, one by one, some members of the late congregation came into the back room from the hall, and kneeling at the backside of the partition, made their confessions.

One old body planted herself upon her knees not far inside the door, counting the beads of a rosary of which every body knew the history, which was repeated or

alluded to, every time the historic beads appeared; namely, that it was of disputed and very uncertain proprietorship; and being the only one possessed among the neighbors in a certain part of the harbor, was now in one family, now in another, and unhappily had attached to it as many feuds as any belt of Indian wampum passes through, though not so deadly. However, the present holder was making devoted use of it just now. Hail Mary after Hail Mary went over her lips and through her fingers, in a low mumble of the former and slow fumble of the latter, her head bowing and body swinging always, but with a slight difference, at times, indicating, as well as the larger beads, when she was engaged with a pater-noster.

One by one had passed away, after confession; the evening had been wearing on, and had grown silent and more silent; the neighborly men who had gone into the lower penetralia of the inn to have a chat and smoke, and, in some cases, a drink, had mostly gone and left the place; the stairs seemed empty; when there came in at the door below and up the stairs, a dark figure of a woman. Mike Henran, the host, half asleep as he was, catching a half-glance at something unusual passing by the open door of the room in which he and an exhausted friend or two were sleeping or dozing, got softly up, of a sudden, out of his nap, and walking to the doorway, looked up after the late comer, and then, lighting a new pipe, sat down to wake and sleep again. The shawl, the black dress, the hood, the veil, concealed her face and person.

The old body and her beads had clambered up from the position in which we have seen them, and, having staid their time at the priest's side, had hobbled back and

passing through the door, had heavily come down stairs—observed by Henran—and departed.

As the old woman passed away, looking most likely, rather at her precious rosary than any thing beside, the female, who had just come up the stairs and was now standing beside the doorway, and between it and the outside window of the entry, turned with clasped hands and stood in a fixed posture, as if, through the dark folds of her veil, her eyes were peering forth into the great solemn night, down into which the far, far, earnest stars were casting light as into a great sea.

Against the door-post, the lonely figure leaned, her hands still clasped; and then, raising her silent, shrouded face toward heaven, she steadily and strongly set her face forward and went in to where the priest was. Here, in the middle of the room, she paused; Father Ignatius neither moved nor looked up, as she stood; the clerk breathed very hard in a deep sleep; and still she paused. At length, not looking up, nor moving, but sitting with his eyes fastened to the floor, he said: "Why do you stay? I'm waiting for you."



CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE TRIBUNAL OF PENITENCE.

IT is a tremendous place, this Tribunal of Penitence ! Be it at St. Peter's in Rome, or in the Pope's chapel, or in one of the deserted churches of the Campagna, or in a little squalid chamber, any where on earth, the walls of deal or masonwork are brushed away, as with the back of the Almighty Hand, in preparation for this miniature foreshaping of the Last Judgment : the canopy of the dread deep of space is spread above ; a pavement of rare stone-work is laid down below : "*a throne is set, from which come lightnings and voices and thunders, and around which is a rainbow, like unto an emerald, and in sight of which is a sea of glass like to crystal ; and four and twenty ancients sit about the throne, clothed in white garments and wearing crowns of gold ; and on the throne there sitteth ONE.*"

Here is to be laid bare the bottom of a deep profounder than the Mighty Depth of Waters, strewn with more wrecks of precious things ; and, in this presence, Sin that brought Death into the world,—whose meed is Death,—and for which everlasting Hell has been prepared,—Sin is here pardoned, and an angel standing here records the everlasting Act of Grace ; the Divine Spirit gives the kiss of peace to the forgiven soul, and Heaven

and Earth here open into one another. Tremendous place! Here, and here only, is the appointed place, where sin may be forgiven.

Or, STAY! The Throne is here, and all the dread surroundings of the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY—but in the seat of the Eternal King, Maker and Judge—a worm! perhaps, upon God's seat, a serpent, glistening and gloating!

Suppose this seat to be usurped; suppose that God has never given power to man to sit here and to summon souls before him! *Then*—WHAT THEN?

The candles burned there and the Priest sat there. The clerk was fast asleep, apparently, with his book between his listless hands, his head upon his breast. The murmur of his recitation was no longer heard. Those still hours of the night had come, in which there seems to be less obstruction between soul and soul.

She came forward with her two hands clasped, and her veil hanging down before her face. She came up to the front of the table, and turning her veiled face toward the Priest and dropping her clasped hands, stood still.

All was still; but some intelligence seemed to reach the Priest, although he never once looked up.

A deep agitation seized his frame; but presently he sat more erect, still looking on the floor,—very pale,—intensely agitated.

"Waiting for me?" she asked, in a clear, low, most mournful voice, repeating the Priest's words. There was a pause of hesitation or of recollection, and then the words came from her slowly; but the pause beforehand and the deep breathing, agitated, earnest silence of the listener were fitted to make intense the interest of the words when she began to speak and while she spoke.

Her voice had in it that tender touch which lays itself,

warm and living on the heart, like a dear voice from home ; from happy childhood, from sad friendship ; from early, unforgotten love ; from reverend admonition, given long ago ; from cheering exhortation of some one that trusted in us and hoped from us ; that tender touch, indeed, which is made up of all the pure and holy, and deep, and true, and honest, that a voice can carry with it, as a wind that blows over whole fields of flowers and fruitage.

Some voices,—at some times,—are such ; such hers was.

She spoke again, slowly and sadly.

“ Are you waiting ? Is it not *I* that am waiting ? Is it not *I* ? ”

She sank slowly upon her knees, and rested her clasped hands upon the table ; but her veiled face was towards him and not toward the crucifix. Her voice was touching and pathetic, to the last degree. The air seemed to pause upon her words before it hid them out of hearing. There was a sound as of tears dropping upon the floor ; but there was no sob ; there was no sigh.

There seemed a noise, as of a person moving, not far off ; she turned about, but no one could be seen except the clerk, asleep, and breathing heavily, as before.

Oh ! what a weary thing is “ Waiting ! ” and her words seemed to come forth out of sorrow unutterable. This was a strange prelude to a confession ; but from such a voice, in giving forth which the whole life seemed to be concerned, who could turn away ? He had prayed, as one might have seen ; but his features still wore the look of deep agitation which had suddenly come over them when she first approached him, though now they showed how strong a hold was laid upon the feeling, to keep it down.

“Have you been waiting?” said he, with a pause after the question.

“Yes! Waiting for my hope to feel the sun, and bloom,” she answered, with a voice rushing fast forth, floated on tears, but scarcely louder than the habit of the place permitted;—“waiting for the life that is my own!”—and then her voice began to drop down, as it were, from step to step,—and the steps seemed cold and damp, as it went down them lingeringly:—“or for trial,—disappointment,—whatever comes!” and at the last, it seemed to have gone down into a sepulchral vault. Her head sank upon her two hands,—still clasped,—resting upon the edge of the table; a convulsion of feeling seemed to be tearing her very frame, as she kneeled there, in the garb as well as the attitude of deep sorrow; but it was only one great struggle.

A motion of the Priest,—perhaps to speak,—and a suppressed exclamation, recalled her, and she reared up her woman’s head again, and spoke:—

—“But I am not come to talk of sorrow,” she said, and paused again.

“*Sister!*” said he, in that pause, (not ‘*Daughter,*’) (and, as he said the word and rested on it,—his voice agitated and full of feeling, as if it had a throbbing life of its own,—the one word expressed many sentences: an assurance of sacredness, of love, and of authority, at once,) “What have you come to this place for? To seek for peace?”

“To seek *you, Brother!*—or, should I say *Father?*”

“Call me as you will,” he answered, gently and mournfully, not hastily; “but what can you gain, in finding me?”

“I have gained something already; I’ve found, within

the cold prison-walls of your priesthood, your heart still living."

"*Sister!*" said he, again, with such an emphasis and pause upon the word, as if he meant that it should speak its whole meaning, while his voice was agitated as before, "what right have I here, except as a priest to hear confession and give comfort to the penitent? and what—?"

—"What right have *I* here," she said, in a voice so low that it did not seem intended to interrupt what he was saying, though he suffered it to interrupt him. "Have *I* any right here," she repeated, more distinctly, when he ceased to speak,—"*except to confess?*"

That gentle, broken woman's voice! Oh! what a power there is in woman's gentleness, when it pleads of right!

The thing said, or the tone, or all, moved the Priest's whole being, as the convulsion (slight though it was) of his body witnessed; but he did not speak.

"Have I any right?" she said, still again, in the same sad pleading.

He then spoke, in a voice that had little of his strength or authority in its sound, though it appealed to what might be, perhaps, a certain fixed principle. He also spoke slowly and sadly.

"What can be between us, Sister," he said, "except this mutual Office of Priest and—?"

—"Penitent!" she said, mechanically, as he paused. Then, with a choking voice, and with that helpless sadness in which one might cry out, who was falling, suddenly, hopeless, into the soft, drifted snow between the glaciers, and whose words the cold wind behind was whirling away, wasted in air, she gasped out:—

"What can be between us?'—Oh!"—and tears

dripped faster through the hush that followed, upon the floor. Again, the Priest was moved ; and so that tears flowed from his eyes, also. A moment is a great thing, when crowded full ; and this lasted a moment. Of herself she struggled forth to firm footing, and said :—

“No ! I did not come here to weep ;” and, gathering strength, went on, keeping her feeling down under her voice :—

“This Office be between us, then ! It may answer my purpose.”

Now, as she spoke, her voice had all the influence that the deepest and strongest feeling could give to it, while it was not so broken as to interrupt her.

“If it be any thing beside confession,” he answered, “is this the place and time ? or, if it be confession, might you not better seek another priest ? And will you not ?”

“Oh ! no ! If I may speak, then it must be to *you* !”

He answered, gently and sadly, bracing himself, in his chair, to listen :—

“I will go through it, if I must ; I do not ask to be spared my share of pain. I see a life full of it before me ; a dark ocean and a dark sky meeting : but I know well, no good can come of this. Why may we not both be spared ?”

—“And yet it is your very part to look on the twitching of the heart’s living fibre ; ay, to hold its walls open, while you gaze in between ! I would not give you pain ; but this is God’s opportunity to me, and I have made my way to this poor little place, feeling as if I were called to it. Let me hold it with my knees, like a poor penitent and suppliant, as I am ! Give me my little right !”

He answered, still more sadly than before, though that was very sadly :—

“You shall have all your right, my Sister.” Then, as if there were more in the words than he had felt till he had uttered them, or more pain in the prospect than in what was past, he bent his head lower, and clasped his hands.

“You would not seek to send me to another to confession, if you knew of the confessional what I know of it, by my own experience,” she said.

The Priest started suddenly, as if these earnest, bitter words were burning coals. He lifted up his face (though with the eyes fast-closed). It was paler than ever; his lips were pale and slightly trembling, and his forehead moist. His agitation was extreme. Again she leaned her forehead on her hands upon the table, while he seemed to pray inwardly. Presently, he had mastered himself enough to speak:—

“Oh! Sister,” he said, “will you not go to some other with your burden?” And then, as if meeting an objection, added—“Not to a priest; go to the bishop, or to Father Terence, at Bay-Harbor.”

“Why should I go to them? I know them not, and have no business with them. I am willing to confess my own sin; but it must be here.”

The Priest started, as if recalling himself; his whole frame heaved, and the momentary ghastliness of his face was like a phosphorescent light, almost, that flashed faintly.

“You spoke of the confessional,” said he; “it is common for enemies to charge it.”

—“But what I know of it is not a scandal, caught from others’ lips; it is no horrible suspicion. It is a frightful fact!”

Father Ignatius, with a hand upon each knee, sat like a man balancing himself in a skiff, and intent, as if for

life or death, upon the dangerous eddies through which he was whirling. She went on, after a pause:—

“I came here, not to speak of that. It never harmed me. It came not near me. Let me confess my sin. Once, I consented,—I will not say on what inducement,—to force a doubt into my mind, where there was none, about a sacred bond between me and another.—” (The Priest lifted up his eyes to heaven, and moved his lips.) “There was no doubt before; there was none since.—Again I suffered myself,—I will not speak of my inducements,—to draw aside into a convent, to weigh and settle questions, where no question was, about my Faith, about my Church, about my Bible. I went to services; I kept the Hours: I read books!—went to confession.—Oh! that dreadful time! My eyes burned: my brain burned: my heart burned: all seemed drying up within me. It was a wilderness and a Devil tempting!—I heard, and read, and confessed, as one in agony may pour down one draught after another.—Is there a greater sin? To take in doubt, where there is no doubt?—Of a plain thing? To suffer question where there is no question, and where none ought to be, because the thing is plain as God’s great sun?—I went no farther; but I went too far!—I broke forth into fresh air, and already I had lost all! Yes, I have suffered something for my sin;—and God has since taken away my beautiful boy! but I stand strongly now; I closed his eyes in a sure faith.”

A mighty feeling seemed to occupy Father Ignatius; not rending like the earthquake, or sweeping over, like the hurricane; but rising, rather, like the strong, black flood, eddying and whirling and swelling up within.

“The faith of a child came back to my heart,” she

said, "when I was free, once more ; it came back like a spring that had been dry.

"There ! I have yielded so far to the customs of this place ; and have laid down, at the door of this church, the sin that was put into my hands at its door ; but now I must break through, cost what it will. I have no power or skill to carry out a part, and, in pretending to confess, insinuate what I have to speak. I am a woman, and must go straight to my object.—It was not to say what I have said.

"Nor have I any claim to urge for myself, now that I have made my way to this place, except to speak. I ask back nothing that has been taken from me ; I have counted it all lost."—(Her voice trembled, as she spoke that short, sad word ; but in a moment she went on, and her voice was steady.) "I am still ready to count it lost ; and ask nothing for it but the leave to plead,—(not for myself, either, but for another,)—against this church and priesthood that have robbed me."

(Poor woman ! is that what she has come for ?)

"It may seem a frenzy that I should come here,—a weak woman,—into the very citadel of this Church, to speak against it ; and into the confessional, to accuse the priest. I have come upon a woman's errand ; but with no bitter words to utter ; no reproaches ; no upbraidings. My whole purpose is to plead ; and I have little time."

(The candles flared ; the clerk breathed hard, in sleep.)

"You are a priest ; but whoever,—man or woman,—has the truth of God, is so far a minister of God, as to have right and power with it, in His name."

Her voice had risen, as she spoke, (such was its energy of conviction and purpose,) above its former level ; the clerk started, and ere he was awake, said, in the church

tone, "*Sed libera nos a—*" Then, having looked about him, and recovered himself, turned again to his book, and his low reading, as before. The Priest did not move, but sat in perfect silence, with a face intensely agitated.

Once more, at this interruption, she bowed her head upon the table, and was still. Again the clerk's reading ceased; again the deep breathing of sleep followed, and again she spoke:—

"I will not plead your loss of all dear memories of the first things that we hold sacred: child's prayers; the catechism; Sunday-lessons; holy books given and treasured; the awfulness and beauty of God's House and Service; the kneeling-place beside Father and Mother; Confirmation; Holy Communion;—I do not mean to appeal to feelings, though I am a woman;—that argument can be used on either side;—but I confront that priesthood that you wear, and ask, Do you feel safe,—can you feel safe,—giving up such convictions and such obligations as were upon you, for a religion and a priesthood that must go over or outside of God's Written Word for every thing that is their own?—(Let me speak freely this once! I speak weeping.) As she said this, the weeping, for a moment, overcame the speaking.—She struggled on:—"When there is no Pope, no Queen of Heaven, no Sacrament of Penance, no Purgatory and pardons out of it, none of the superstition, (let me speak it!) and idolatry, and absolute dominion over soul and body, which this cruel, dreadful priesthood brings with it, like a car of Juggernaut, no dreadful, dangerous intimacy of men with wicked women; nor subjection of innocent, trusting women to false ministers of God;—none of this in all the written Word of God. Preaching of the Gospel comes in, hundreds of times; and faith, and love, and fellow-

ship ; a simple, brotherly ministry, and a church which is the holy gathering of believers !

“ Father Ignatius Debree !—once Minister of the Church of England !—You have taken to your heart, and confess with your lips,—(I speak in tears,)—a worship corrupted, a faith perverted, sacraments changed, a ministry altered in form and spirit ! Yet whatever authority any one of these has, it cannot turn for witness to the Bible ! Not one of them is in it ; and the others are !

“ Can you dare to break down, and tear asunder, and trample under foot, what is in the Bible, and what was in the hearts and on the lips of Apostles and Martyrs, (as it is in our poor hearts and on our lips,) for those uncertain things ?—You cannot !

“ For a while, when you are with other priests, or very busy, you may not tremble or falter ; but when you are alone, or when you are among Protestants, as you must be often, the thoughts of what you have abandoned and what you have chosen,—of what you have lost, and what you have gained, will come ; and then the memories of childhood will stretch out their little hands to you ; the faces of other forsaken memories will come gently and mournfully up to you ; you will hear old voices, and see old scenes.—You cannot help it !—You have known the truth, and had it. Your mind will never satisfy itself with this ; your heart can never really set its love here ! Never ! never ! And when you feel what it must be, being false ! ”——

Again there was a slight noise, as of some one moving, not far off ; but, beside the Priest, only the sleeping clerk was to be seen. She had been kneeling, and she rose slowly. There was silence.

“Is it finished?” asked the Priest, master of his voice, though ghastly pale.

She stood still before him; and then, with a voice partly breaking, again said, “Yes!” Then again she said, “I have thought and prayed, for years,—and have spoken! Thank God for this chance! Thank you for hearing!”

“Are you satisfied, now?” asked the Priest.

There was no answer, but a convulsion of the woman’s frame as if her heart were breaking before this impassive strength of the man.—She rallied herself, as she had rallied herself before, and answered:—

“No! no! but neither am I wearied. When I am gone, I shall still plead, elsewhere,—for one thing,—for one thing! Farewell, Father Ignatius! Will you say, ‘God be with you?’”

“Oh! yes, indeed! God be with you, forever!”

Suddenly she passed out;—disturbing, as she went, a woman who seemed sleeping by the doorway.

Father Ignatius fell down heavily, on his knees, before the table.



CHAPTER XXXIX.

FATHER DEBREE AT BAY-HARBOR AGAIN.

WE must go to other of the characters of our story.

Some days after having mentioned to the priests at Bay-Harbor the suspicions entertained among the people of his neighborhood, Father Debree again sought the Mission-premises, and Father Terence.

The substantial dignitary, before sitting down, said :—

“Will ye oblige me by giving that door a small swing into th’ other room?” and waited, upon his feet, until the door had been opened, and the adjoining room shown to have no person in it.

“What’s betwixt you and him, then?” he asked, when all was quiet again. “It’s not good having trouble;—and with one like him. You’re the younger priest, and it’s good to bear the yoke—portare jugum,—(I told ye that before,) and ye’ll, maybe, be high enough, by-and-by. Take a bit of advice off me, and don’t mind um.”

“I shall take it, pleasantly, I hope, and do my duty by him, too; I’ve come about important business, Father Terence, concerning the Church.”

Father Terence’s countenance prepared to rise at this reference to himself (as was proper) of important church-business; but in the end, it fell.

"And did ye tell him, yet?" said the dignitary, looking a little annoyed at the prospect of this important business, or at the idea of its being of such a character as to have already set his two juniors at variance.

"Oh no!" said Father Debree, "what I have to say could not be said, properly, to any but yourself."

Reassured by this information, the worthy old Priest began gradually to take on his importance, and awaited the opening of the business complacently.

"It concerns the young girl missing from Peterport. It is generally believed that she has been carried off," said Father Debree, by way of stating the case.

The expression in the senior's face changed, as the hue in the evening cloud changes; his look of dignity was passing into one of moderate indignation. The change seemed to puzzle his companion. "You know about her, I believe?" he asked.

"Indeed I do, then," answered Father Terence, with much dignity and some asperity. The other continued, with a doubtful look, but with the respectful manner he had used from the first: "Perhaps you're aware, already, of what I was going to say?"

"Indeed, and it's likely I may," said the dignitary, sententially.

"Then, perhaps, I'd better say nothing."

"It's little, I think, would be gained by telling all the stories that foolish people make up."

Mr. Debree was evidently taken by surprise, in having his communication so suddenly and summarily cut off.

"Are there no grounds for suspicion, and is nothing to be done to remove it?" he asked.

"And was it this ye fell out with Father Nicholas for, that time?"

"Certainly, the fear that there was reason for suspicion in this case, increased the dislike that former circumstances had given me."

The dignitary's good-natured face grew redder than before. He spoke with feeling, when he said, in answer :—

"Then it's only for being faithful to meself, it was, that ye thought the worse of um. I'm surprised at ye saying ye believe there's grounds of suspicion. I'm thankful to ye for being that honest that ye told me what ye thought ; but isn't it rather forward ye are, suspecting one that's greatly older than yerself, if nothing else, and a priest that's risen to be honored and respected, besides ?"

Mr. Debree looked still further disconcerted at this little harangue, and the speaker followed it up.

"I wonder ye could think the like of that story to be true, yerself. I'm astonished, indeed. I don't know the meaning of it, at all."

"I'm very sorry to find the subject so unpleasant to you ; but if you would allow me to state the whole case——"

"Unpleasant ! It is that, then. Do ye think is it pleasant to have things thrown up in one's face, this way ? Could not yerself leave it, without coming to stand up against your superiors in the Church ? I think something must have come over ye." With these words, the superior drew himself up in his chair.

"But, Father Terence, if there was strong presumptive evidence, I think you'd be one of the last men to discredit it, without sifting," said the other.

"Sure, I don't know who would know better than meself that it's all lies."

"But, surely, in an affair of such consequence, you

wouldn't take it for granted——?" urged Father De-bree.

"Would I take it for granted I hadn't swallowed myself?" asked the elder, very decidedly.

"But this is scarcely a parallel case," said the other, with polite perseverance.

"Isn't it, then? Sure, I think I needn't examine to show meself that I hadn't stolen a girl in Peterport!"

"Ah! but you couldn't say, confidently, that another had not."

"But I don't speak of others; it's meself I speak of."

"But why shouldn't we speak of others, when others are concerned?"

"Then ye were not aware," said Father Terence,—this turn of the conversation making him throw aside—as he was always very glad to do—his annoyance and dignified reserve, and resuming his hearty kindliness, when he thought he saw through the case, and that the younger priest was imperfectly informed, "it's meself that they're after accusing."

"I never heard that," answered the younger.

"Indeed, it's easy seeing ye didn't," said Father Terence again.

"I think that must be a mistake," said the younger priest.

"Indeed, I think so meself; and I'm middling sure of it," said the senior, a smile venturing again into his face.

"I mean, I think it must be a mistake that you were suspected. Of course, no one who knew you could doubt, for a moment, whether you were innocent."

"It was Father Nicholas told me, then; and there's not manny a one hears more than him. It's only a few

days ago he said, the people—that's the Protestants—were saying all sorts of things, and suspecting the Catholic priests, and, as he said, meself 's at the head of them, "and ye might as well suspect his Holiness himself," said he.

"I've come from the midst of it, and I heard nothing of you; but I know that *he* is suspected; and there are strange circumstances, such as, for his own sake, he ought to explain."

The dignitary's countenance lighted up, decidedly, as he answered:—

"Indeed, that's another horse of the one color, as they say. So they've left meself off, and taken on suspecting him! But, then," he continued, "I'm fearful it's just his being my own coadjutor that's made them do it;" and a generous feeling of not allowing another to suffer for him, exhibited itself in his face. "They think he's younger, and not so conspikeyis, and easier handled."

"No," answered the other; "I think you were always above suspicion; but they have always, I'm told, suspected him, and the impression, that he is involved in it as principal, has been growing from the first."

"And how would he tell meself, then, it was me they were at?" asked the elder, not quite seeing his way out of the enigma. Leaving the answer to this question to turn up by-and-by, he hurried on upon the new path that presented itself to him. "What's this they say about um, then? Do they say he's stolen her? And how would he get her?"

To this crowd of questions, Mr. Deeree answered collectively.

"She disappeared in the night or morning, and is known to have been at or near the house that he visited

that night with two nuns ; and one more female came back in his punt, from that house, than went to it."

"But,—don't ye see ?—he wouldn't be carrying females about at night in a punt."

"He took two Sisters up with him, you know, Father Terence."

A recollection of the proposed plan of Father Nicholas's charitable excursion of that night, probably came up to the elder priest at this suggestion.

"But he would never have carried off a Protestant girl. What would he do the like of that for? Sure a man can't carry off all that's Protestants."

Mr. Debreë repeated the tenor of the conversation between himself and Father Nicholas.

"But he wouldn't be doing the like without asking myself for leave or license. And where do they think has he sent her, when he got her?"

"They say, I'm told, that she's with the Sisters, here, in the Mission premises ; but what authority they have for saying so, I don't know."

"Ah! thin, it's little I've troubled that place since they were in it. Only once I was in it, at his asking. But, sure, would he bring her here without ever so much as saying 'with yer leave,' or 'by yer leave!' It's not likely he would, and me at the head o' the District."

The venerable head of the dignitary swung silently and solemnly, twice, from side to side, as he resolved this question in the negative.

"I don't know what they go upon for that ; but I think the other circumstances deserve to be examined."

The senior looked perplexed again, and, reverting to his own experience of his "coadjutor," said,—

"But how 'll we find out, if he won't tell us?"

"The law won't wait for him to tell."

"But, sure, ye're not for taking the law of a priest! and him yer superior, too?"

"Of course, not I; but suppose the friends bring the law down here! Wouldn't it be well, by a timely attention, to remove the occasion of suspicion?"

"But I'm satisfied we'll never get it out of him, at all."

"Can't you do *this*, Father Terence; can't you find out whether she is here, or has been here?"

Father Terence looked very reluctant to enter upon any such work as was proposed.

"It's not that easy done," he said. "I have no knowledge of the place, at all, more than Solomon's temple."

"It isn't for me to suggest, Father Terence; but it's not a very large place, and if the Sisters were examined——"

"It's easy just stepping over yerself, then, and we'll know in a jiffy. I'll give ye a bit of note to introduce ye," said Father Terence, having devised a simple and ready way of satisfying Mr. Debreë, and, very likely, everybody else.

"But, Father Terence, though I feel sincerely for the father, and though it's natural, from the position I hold at Peterport, for me to wish the thing cleared up, and proper for me to mention it to you, it would not be my part, in any way, to set myself about investigating in your premises. It seems to me that you are the proper person."

Father Terence was no coward, but he seemed very loth to undertake this business. Lighting his pipe, which he had not yet lighted, and suffering the smoke to float about his head, like clouds about the mountain's crest, he summoned a council in the midst of it, as Pope makes Homer say, that—

“Jove convened a senate of the skies,
Where high Olympus’ cloudy tops arise.”

From this deliberation, after a time, he proclaimed—

“I’ve found, mostly, it’s best not inquiring into things.”

“But when things will be inquired into by the law, if we do nothing about them ; and the consequences, to ourselves and the Church, may be very serious ; is it not worth our while to anticipate that investigation and its consequences ? ”

“What would hinder yourself speaking to him ? ” asked Father Terence, personifying, in the masculine gender, the object of the inquiry. The other priest took it simply, as it was said, and answered :—

“I cannot as properly do it, being, as I am, his junior ; but I’m not at all afraid to have him know what I have said, if you should think fit to enter upon the subject, and will say it all in his presence, if called upon to do it.”

“Ay, then, we’ll see about it,” concluded the dignitary, and finishing his pipe, shook from it the white ashes, re-filled it, but then, instead of rekindling it, laid it aside, and asking—

“Did ye hear the pig out, beyond in the garden ? ” started forth as if upon some errand about the live-stock of the Mission, requesting Father Debreë to amuse himself for a while alone.

The door had scarcely closed upon him, than it opened again to let him in.

“I beg pardon,” said he, heartily, “I’m forgetting to offer ye any thing ; ” and taking a black quart bottle from under a table near the wall, and finding, somewhere, a tumbler that had lost a piece of itself, he proposed to exercise the hospitality of the time and country, in his own kindly way.

“Here’s some sugar that I keep convenient,” said he, drawing forward, with his stout hand, a paper with yielding contents. “Ah! no, then, it’s this must be it,” he continued, substituting one of the same blue color, but not, like the first, redolent of tobacco.

He had just produced a teacup without handle, which he called the mate of the tumbler.

“Our furniture ’s not quite equal to the King’s or the Pope’s,” he said, by way of apology, “but I’ve store of glasses in the house.”

Father Debree declined, with many thanks, the hearty hospitality offered, and was, at length, again left alone, with an apology.



CHAPTER XL.

FATHER O'TOOLE'S ASSISTANT.

FATHER O'TOOLE, on leaving the other priest, went out at the outer door of the house, and—no pig appearing, in the course of his circuit of the narrow grounds of the Mission,—visited his geese and ducks, and heard a chorus of contented grunts from the dwellers in the sty. At length, turning away with decision, he again entered the house.

With a good, solid, steady step he mounted up the stairs, shut a door or so, and then, knocking one loud and several lesser knocks (which expressed resolution,—qualified,—) quoted, aloud, one line of a hymn :—

“ ‘Cœleste pulset ostium.’ ”

From within the door at which he stood, came forth—

“ ‘Vitale tollat præmium :’ ”

Please come in, Reverend Father.”

And Father O'Toole entered.

The room was much more substantial-looking and elegant than the rest of the house in which it was. The woodwork, generally, was painted of a dark color ; that of the chimney was black and varnished. Well proportioned book shelves of black, varnished wood, and well filled with handsome books, covered a portion of the wall ;

the wall-paper was slate-colored, with black border. A slate-colored drop-curtain hung partly down before the window. Not every thing in the room was elegant or costly ; but some things were rich, and all were tasteful.

The table at which the occupant of the room sat, had a cover of black broadcloth, with a narrow edge of velvet of the same color ; a priedieu stood at a little distance behind it, against a folding-screen adorned with boldly-marked crayon drawings of allegoric subjects. The priedieu, itself, was decorated with black silk velvet turned up with silk. Upon the top, and flanked on each side by a wax candle, was a crucifix about three feet high, superbly wrought in ivory. A painful representation of Our Lord's agony on the cross, like what may be seen in German churches, hung opposite the window.

A perfect match for the surroundings was the man sitting at the table, with his ivory features and black, glossy hair and dress ;—for there sat Father Nicholas as we before described him, resting his feet, in black velvet slippers, on a hassock of the same material beneath the table. There was now hanging on his bosom, by a black bead-chain from his neck, a miniature of a fair, saintly female, with hands clasped and eyes looking upward.

He arose, with much dignity and humility, at once, as the other entered, laying down a book open, on the back of which, in very distinct letters, was the name : “ Exercit. Spirit. S. Ignatii.”

“ I am very proud to see you in my room, Reverend Father,” said he ; “ will you be so kind as to occupy this chair, an easier one than mine, and more appropriate to years and honors ? ”

He wheeled out, accordingly, a comfortable arm-chair

of stuffed morocco, into which the senior, with a somewhat awkward, but sincere and solid courtesy, suffered himself to descend gradually, and then (a little suddenly,) drop.

"Always well engaged. Ah! what a happy thing to have that leisure from great and constant cares that will permit of holy studies. It was mine, once. 'Twas my own, once. But there's many's the candle is put under a bushel without our meaning it. Before I found my place I thought often of making a bit of a blaze in the world, some way; but now all that is metamorphosed entirely. 'Introduction!' ah! what's this, then? Oh! Saint Francis de Sales. French, I suppose. Oh! to be sure. 'Chapitre XI;'—chapter Eleventh. That's plain enough. 'Of the exercise of'—something or other, 'and examen of the conscience.' It wouldn't be so hard after all; but considering it isn't every body that learns French, it would have been small blame to the holy man if he had written in plain English that every one understands, or in Latin itself."

"You wished to see me on business, I believe, Father Terence," said Father Nicholas very engagingly, laying his watch carefully down upon the table. "I hope you won't be afraid of interrupting me, for I'm quite at your service."

Somewhere in this calm courtesy, or in the action that accompanied the words, there must have been something peremptory or in some way embarrassing, for the dignitary's good-natured face and eyes testified to such a feeling.

"Indeed a good deal of business we have together," he answered, for the time, not being prepared, perhaps, to answer more definitely on the sudden.

“Our Sisters are inclined to complain that they never have the benefit of a visit from the head of the mission,” said Father Nicholas again, smiling. “Will you allow me to pray for them, while it’s on my mind, that you’ll honor them and favor them in that way before long? Excuse me for taking the conversation away. I listen.”

If he listened, he listened to small purpose. The digitary sat uneasily; prepared to speak by clearing his throat, and looking to either side. In doing this, if he did not prepare himself for proceeding to business, he, at least, secured a subject for a passing diversion of the conversation.

Taking up something from the floor, under the table, which proved to be a glove, he laid it upon a book, observing,—

“Y’have a small hand of yer own, if ye can put that on it.”

Father Nicholas’s hands were quite small and graceful, as one might see who looked at them; but this glove was smaller and more slender still, apparently. It looked like one in frequent use. Such as it was, it seemed strange in that place, and the occupant of the room seemed to feel awkwardly at the first sight. Leaving it, however, to lie where it was, he spoke very freely of it.

“No,” said he, “that’s not mine. It’s a lady’s, apparently; and, probably, belongs to one of the Sisters. How it came there, I can’t say; but things often come and go between them and me. This might come in a parcel.”

The elder priest looked grave. He might not have thought of there being any other proprietor of this article of apparel than the occupant of the room until he was told it; but having heard what he had heard, he seemed to have mastered his difficulty of speaking, and

the occasion brought him, most unexpectedly, to the very subject on which he and Father Debreë had been talking.

"It's my opinion," he said, "it's better not having too much to do with women, if they're nuns, itself. The old rules for priests are the good rules, I'm thinking. Yourself's perfectly innocent, certainly;—it's not that I'm speaking of;—but bad things happen sometimes; and it's good for the like of us to be a long way from evil tongues. They're saying now, ye've got that young Protestant girl from Peterport."

The good-natured Father Terence had uttered his first two sentences with the confidence of a man speaking truths of general acceptation. At that point where it may have occurred to him that he was making a personal application of general principles, and assuming a superiority which he was always diffident about asserting, his usual kindness of feeling came over him, and he went precipitately over the next sentence, and by the time he came to the last very important one, which contained the gist of his whole business, it might have appeared to be only a side observation to withdraw attention from the former ones.

Father Nicholas had been sitting with steady eyes fixed upon the speaker, and the most easy, well-bred (or elegant) air of listening; his ivory face being at all times a secure screen for any thing that was passing behind it, unless to a very keen sight, and only his eyes showing a little more fire than usual.

The elder having ceased to speak, he made answer.

"Scarcely a Protestant, Father Terence; she is baptized a Catholic" —

"I never hard that," said the elder. "She didn't get baptized to my own knowing."

"No, but she was baptized sixteen years ago, as your book shows."

"That's before I was in it."

"Yes, it was in Father Dale's time, and, if you'll be kind enough to look, you'll see it."

While the worthy old priest was arranging his thoughts upon this subject, and very likely preparing to express an opinion upon the extent of that authority which the Church had acquired by the secret administration of that sacrament, his informant was waiting to allow the information to take possession. When Father Terence began to speak, and had got so far as to say,—

"But she's grown up a Protestant, and she's a Protestant this" —, then he was gently interrupted,—

"If you please, Reverend Father, I have only told half my story yet. Will you allow me to tell the rest? You know it as well as I, or better, but when it's all put together, it may make a different impression from any that you have had. We all know her mother for an apostate; to save her child would be a triumph" —

"There's many's the one's the same way, then," interrupted the elder in his turn.

"Happily, as I have good reason to know, she very recently put herself, of her own accord, in the way to be reconciled. If she had drawn back afterward, in fever or in fear of the step that she was taking, it would have been mercy not to let her be lost, through any such weakness. If we had taken *any* means to secure her, it would have been simply duty; but as the girl is missing, we need not speculate upon what might have been. Let it be a consolation to you, Father Terence, and to any Catholic that is interested in one so related to the Church, that she was baptized in infancy, and had made an effort to be recon-

ciled. That suspicion should have turned from you to me, does not surprise me. They will suspect, and, finding it impossible long to suspect you, they put one less known, and less generally esteemed, in your stead."

He did not stop at this point; but hastened to touch a subject of importance which had, perhaps, slipped from Father Terence's mind.

"You speak truly of the caution and distance to be observed, as regards persons of the other sex. My dear Father Terence, if there were any thing dangerous or improper in a priest exercising his sacred function singly, (and I grant the propriety of always being associated with another priest in the work, according to the rule and practice of the Society,) yet how is it that so much care and labor and responsibility, in regard to these Sisters, has been thrown upon me against my wish? I do not complain; I might not have mentioned it now, except for what has been said; but I am sure that not only it would have been the greatest pleasure to me, as well as privilege to them, but, also, I have repeatedly begged, in person, the favor of Father O'Toole's joint and superior supervision. I should be very glad to hope that hereafter it might be secured."

The assault was fairly turned upon the dignitary, whether by accident of war or by Father Nicholas's skill; and the good-natured man began to defend himself.

"It's true I did not do much in that way this while back. The truth is, I don't fancy that sort of work, when it doesn't come pat in my way. In parish-duty it's my desire to be diligent; but I'm not accustomed to females, and I'm not for having charge of a House o' them."

"Pray forgive me," said the other Priest, "it isn't for me to call you to account, or to complain.—Is our Peter-

port man happy in his place? I can't find out any thing, pleasantly, from him."

"Faith, then, I'd forgotten him; he'll take care of himself, a bit; but I mustn't leave him too long, this way."

"Don't allow me to detain you," said Father Nicholas; "but you had some business with me, I think. I fear I've interrupted it."

The elder Priest looked disconcerted.

"Will ye see him yourself, then?" he asked, gathering himself out of his seat, and preparing to go. Father Nicholas rose politely; but with a changed expression.

"I thought there had been some modest and charitable suggestion of Debreë's," said he; "he's a young gentleman that will need to be taught his place. If you'll allow me, I'll come down. I'll follow you directly, Father Terence."

And Father Terence took his leave.

Almost immediately after his solid tread had begun to be heard on the stairs, a young woman, in a conventual dress, made her appearance from behind the screen. Without noticing her, the Priest snapped with his finger nail a folded paper quite across the room, exclaiming,—

"Bah! I don't care for any trouble they can make us about that girl; I don't think the law will kill us; but this is small game for me. I ought to be at work among long heads and long arms, diplomatists and statesmen, as I once was: guiding and controlling, and thwarting, on occasion. I want a place where I can meet foot to foot, and strain inch by inch, against the keenest and strongest minds; and here I am!"

He twirled, impatiently, the medallion portrait of the saintly lady; and while he was standing in thought, the nun spoke:—

"But you are doing a great deal, and exerting great influence here," she said.

"Yes, this seems as much of a world to you as any, I suppose," he answered, without turning, "except Longford. I am directing the consciences of fishwives, and counselling this Very Reverend Father, when I might just as well be, and have been, in the closets of princes and cardinals!—and I am beginning at the bottom again, and in the very dirt, as if I had never climbed before!"

"But it's a good deal to have such power in the Council and in Government-House"——

"Dabbling, at this distance, in the politics of St. Johns and Government-House! *That*, instead of swaying a department of state in a country of the first rank! Quo-usque! Ah! 'Quomodo cecidisti de cœlo, lucifer, qui mane oriebaris!'"

He put one hand to his forehead, and swung the portrait about a finger of the other.

The nun made another trial:—

"This last time I was a month at Government-House, I heard them often"——

The Priest had quite recovered himself, and looked as the calm sea looks, as if he never was tossed with tempest.

"Copy these papers, please, Frances," he said, summarily, "and lay them here afterward with the copies, under a weight."

"Are you going out?" she asked, with what sounded like regret.

Without any answer in words, he laid before her the glove which Father Terence had picked up, opened the door, and passing out, turned to give a silent bow, and closed the door again behind him.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE THREE PRIESTS TOGETHER.

THE good-natured Father Terence came hastily back from his visit up stairs to Father Nicholas, and prepared his guest for what he himself seemed to consider a formidable interview, by announcing, in a rather flurried way,—

“Himself’s coming, but don’t heed him.”

Whoever has waited for an encounter, of the sort that was now approaching, has felt the nervous excitement to which Father Debree’s face, slightly flushed as it was, and his kindling eye, gave witness in him. The elder priest seemed to feel like one who had innocently opened a flood-gate, or set some formidable machinery in motion which he knew not how to stop, and could only stand and look upon, as it rushed on.

“I’m not concerned about meeting him,” said the younger ; and, as he spoke, Father Nicholas came in.

The contrast in personal appearance between the two men who were about to meet, was very noticeable. Father Debree looked as if his soul were woven into the whole substance of his body. There was a nobleness of air and manner about him that at once engaged one’s confidence ; and his face, full of earnestness, and his clear eye, had yet a gentleness that showed a living sympathy which is very winning to love. Father Nicholas was handsome

beyond the common range, intelligent and thoughtful-looking,—giving one, indeed, the impression that there was might in him ; and yet there was a feeling, also, that within him were unseen, doubtful depths, such as some people trust them to and others shrink from, by simple intuition.

So much was on the outside of the two men ; and at the moment, while Father Debreë had a slight flush upon his cheek, and in his eye a fire, as we have said, Father Nicholas came into the room and saluted him, (after bowing to the elder priest,) with his usual look of self-possession and his usual paleness ; though perhaps his eye flashed and his mouth was a little compressed.

“I may come to my business without preface, I suppose,” said the latter. “I believe you have taken upon yourself to speak to Father O’Toole of suspicions entertained of me in Peterport. I am not much concerned about the public opinion of that intelligent town ; but I think I have a right to ask on what ground you have become their representative and spokesman.”

“Ay, and don’t be warm, Father Nicholas, either ; sure it’s asy speaking of things in a quiet way,” said Father O’Toole.

“I have mentioned the reports current,” said Father Debreë, “as deserving, in my opinion, to be counted of importance to the Church, and of still greater importance to right and justice.”

“Allow me to inquire how.”

“To the Church, because its ministers are implicated, by general suspicion, in a cruel outrage ; and to right and justice, because, whether there is any ground for the suspicion or not, full investigation ought to be demanded, and every assistance given to an investigation.

“Let us take things quietly, as the Very Reverend Father O’Toole recommends. Suppose the Church’s ministers *are* implicated, (we went over much the same ground the other day,) is that any thing new, or strange, or bad, in itself? *Væ vobis cum benedixerint,—beati cum maledixerint.* As to right and justice, in case we *had* this girl, or had control over her, I suppose we might fairly claim to know something of them, and to care something for them. I suppose, too, that the ‘ministers of the Church’ (as you say) have some rights which are of value, as well as others. I suppose their freedom and independence to be of some consequence to themselves and the Church, and, in my own person, would not yield an inch, or a hair’s breadth, the rights of my order. If one of us foolishly put himself into their hands, on their demand, others will be at their mercy, forever after. For the Church—I think she is strong enough to stand, for some years yet, all the blasting of men’s breath; and that she would be no gainer if her priests were at the beck of the multitude of her enemies.”

Father Debreë answered:—

“I cannot see how innocent men can have any other feeling than a desire for a thorough searching where they have been unjustly suspected, and where, in them, a sacred cause suffers suspicion; and I cannot see how private right has any thing to fear in such a case;—and where a quiet and kind-hearted people are touched and hurt in their best feelings; and more, where a family is suffering the greatest sorrow that can afflict human hearts,—the loss, by some uncertain fate, of its very fairest and dearest, its joy and its crown,—it does not seem to me too much to expect of any who have it in their power to throw light into the uncertain horror that surrounds those

innocent mourners, that they will not rest until they have done what in them lies to clear it up."

"That's well said," exclaimed Father Terence, who was leaning forward on the arms of his chair, while the others stood facing each other—"and the right feeling, too!"

Father Nicholas listened devoutly to the old Priest's words, and then said, with a bend of the body,—

"With your leave, Father Terence! As to guilt or innocence, I have no thought of pleading here; but of my fit course of action, under the suspicions held of me, I shall crave leave to judge. I am by no means prepared to say that I should consider any human affections in comparison with the saving of a soul, if I were called to determine between the two. In this case, however, as it happens, I have not been gloating over the sorrows of parents whom I had plunged in mourning, but have done what was necessary to relieve them from uncertainty, as far as respects myself.—What do you think of that, sir?" he concluded, putting a paper into Father Deeree's hand. It was a copy of a Conception-Bay weekly newspaper, published the day before; and it was folded so as to expose a particular portion, to which, also, he pointed with his finger. The latter read the paper attentively and carefully, having first glanced from the top to the bottom, as to a signature. He then returned it, with a bow, without comment.

"I beg pardon, Father Terence, for using this paper before making you acquainted with its contents, if you'll allow me, I will read it."

"Ah! then, it's bad enough having words, let alone writing."

"Perhaps, if you'll be kind enough to hear this read,

you may not think ill of it, Father Terence"—and looking up at the elder priest, and taking his assent for granted, Father Nicholas read as follows :—

“ Bay-Harbor, ss. Northern District of Newfoundland, }
— Day of August, in the Year of our Lord, —. }

“ Then personally appeared before me, Peter McManikin, Justice of the Peace, &c. &c. Nicholas Crampton, a priest of the Catholic Church, residing in the Mission-Premises, in said Bay-Harbor, and being duly sworn, doth, upon his oath, depose and say that he, the said deponent, has understood and believes that a young female has lately disappeared, and is now missing from the harbor of Peterport, in Conception-Bay, and that he, the said deponent, has been, or is suspected by many persons in said Peterport and elsewhere, of having been or being concerned, with others, in the keeping of said young person from her friends ; and that he, the said deponent, does not know, and has no means of knowing, where the said young person is, nor whether she is living or dead ; nor does he know any persons or person who can give such information ; and that he is thoroughly acquainted with every part of the Mission-Premises in Bay-Harbor, and with the building occupied by certain nuns, upon those premises ; and is fully convinced that she is not in or upon such premises, in any way ; and said deponent further, upon oath, doth declare and say, that if he, the said deponent, knew where the said young person was, or what had become of her, or who could give information about her, he would declare it.

Given under, &c. PETER McMANNIKIN.”

“ I, Nicholas Crampton, the deponent aforesaid, having read the above, do sign it, in token that it is a true copy of the deposition by me made.

August —, A. D.—. NICHOLAS CRAMPTON.”

"I'm glad to hear ye say that much, anny way," said Father Terence.

"Is the Reverend Mr. Debree satisfied?" asked the reader.

"I can't see that it denies her having *been* upon these premises," said the person appealed to.

"You've a sharp eye for flaws, and are not disposed to release a brother priest from suspicion, too easily," said Father Nicholas, sneering.

"Ah! then," said the kindly Father Terence, "ye shouldn't doubt his meaning."

"I should be glad to know," said Father Nicholas, "if I am to be badgered in this way by a priest not only younger than myself, but one whose recent admission and inexperience in the Church might be expected to teach him modesty, or, at least, reserve, in the expression of his opinions, and giving of his advice to those who are both his elders, and his superiors in the sacred office."

"Indeed that wouldn't be good of anny one," said Father Terence; "but sure I never saw it on him."

Father Nicholas continued: "There may be license in the Anglican sect, which does not exist in the Catholic Church. It must be remembered, always, that here there is subordination. Whether your way is likely to advance you in the Church, you must judge; but as far as regards myself, I am not disposed to allow a censorship of my actions, which, if intended, and persisted in, would seem to be nothing but deliberate impertinence."

"Stay, brother," said Father Terence; "I never knew a man the better, yet, of having hard words thrown at him; and ye'll do well to mind that there's older, again, than yourself in it; and Father Debree is a guest of my own the same time."

"Thank you, Father Terence," said the Peterport clergyman; "I'm sure that any manly truth and honesty will find encouragement from you. I cannot say what influence my having a conscience, and using my tongue, may have upon my prospects in the Church; but if, to advance in it, I must barter away my English love of honesty and plain speaking, I will never purchase success at such a price. There is not the man living, so far as I know, to whom, if I felt it my duty to tell him that he had done wrong, I should hesitate to say it; while I will never, knowingly, fail of the respect and duty which belong to those who are above me."

Father Nicholas kept his eyes fixed upon the speaker, in a steady gaze, while a smile of sarcasm came slowly about his mouth. Father Debree colored more deeply.

"Since a sort of fraternal inquisition seems to be in vogue with us, allow me to take my turn for a moment. Does my strictly-conscientious reverend brother happen to know where one Helen Mary, (or whatever she was called,) not long since a postulant in the Presentation Convent at Lisbon, and who ran away from it, is, at this present moment?"

The person addressed started at the mention of the name, and became instantly pale; such an effect had it upon him, that his frame seemed coming together.

"It may be necessary to remind you, Father Terence," said Father Nicholas, "that this lady is the Mrs. Barrè whom you have heard of. I believe my reverend brother's susceptible conscience has been so occupied in imputing fault to his neighbor, as to have forgotten the danger of scandal to the church from a much nearer quarter."

"Ah! what's this, then?" asked Father Terence, turning a pained and alarmed look upon the priest from Pe-

terport ; "I don't know what ye mean, at all, Father Nicholas ; I'm sure there's no harm in him."

"Far be it from me to say that there's any harm in him ; but, perhaps, when you hear more, you may incline to think that the circumstances are such as to make it important, as he says, to the Church, and to right and justice, that an explanation should be made of them. I doubt whether he has thought of mentioning the circumstance to you, but I have reason to know that this lady is comfortably settled within his limits, and within a very short distance of him."

"This is a strange story !" said Father O'Toole, sitting uneasily.

"I also know that she is living in Peterport," answered the priest from that place, "and I——"

"But how is this ? Sure, ye wouldn't be bringing her there to be a snare to yerself, and a scandal to the Church !"

"No ; that is just what I have not done ; and what you, Father Terence, at least, would not suspect me of. It is by no action or wish of mine that she is there ; and it was to my entire astonishment that I first learned the fact."

"You seem to have suffered it to grow into a more than nine-days' wonder," said Father Nicholas. "Of course, I do not say that there's any harm in it ; but it is well known in that intelligent community, which, as he says, has devoted so much of its attention to my humbleness, that several meetings and conversations, of various character, have had place between this lady and the Reverend Father Debreë. I, of course, know nothing of their nature, whether *in the Confessional* or in private houses, or elsewhere."

“Does she come to the confessional, then?” asked Father O’Toole, very ready to subside out of his alarm and uneasiness. “Sure I think ye’ve got, in a manner, the bit between her teeth—to use a figure of speech—and ye can bring all right.”

“It wouldn’t appear that she has any disposition to come back into the bosom of the Church,” said Father Nicholas; “she *seems*, indeed, to have ‘the bit between her teeth.’”

“Ah! then, it’s a bad thing having any thing to do with her; and I wonder, indeed, you didn’t mention it to myself,” said the old priest, addressing Father Debree gravely, and twirling his thumbs over each other.

The younger man was much agitated.

“I haven’t done that, I confess,” said he; “I tried to speak of it the other day. I have never met with her of my own will; and in whatever I have said to her my conscience is clear, before God, that I have spoken as became a Christian priest.”

“I believe ye, man; and is this it, then, ye were wishing to speak about that time? but couldn’t ye write me, the way I could give ye a bit of advice? It’s not fit to go on, the way it is, in my opinion;—but how would she come to confession, and she not wishing to be reconciled?” As Father Terence added this, he glanced from one of the younger priests to the other. Father Debree stood silent. Father Nicholas answered, in a subdued tone:—

“I fear the gossip or the scandal of the place might assign motives, the least harmful of which would be a wish to assail the *faith* of the father confessor; a more directly personal and more material motive *might* be insinuated.”

"I think y'are not kind, some way, Father Nicholas," said the elder.

Father Debree's expression and manner changed at the remark from his brother priest, to which the kind-hearted old man had just taken exception. All hesitation disappeared at once, and an indignant look took possession of his face, and he stood straight up to confront the speaker.

"You have tampered with the sacred privacy of the place, then?" he said. "Some ears have been listening for you—(I care not whose)—where only two mortal beings have a right to hear, and if so, you know well the falsehood of any insinuation that you may make against the character of my involuntary intercourse with that person; and I have a right to trust to a reputation without blemish or reproach, and to an honest open conversation in the world for my defence, with those who have known me, or who have hearts like Father Terence's, against any such insinuation."

"I've made no insinuation, I believe; I have merely suggested the suspicions that might be held in the world; and it would seem from my reverend brother's intentional or unintentional admission, that there is ground, in fact, for the suspicion upon one or other of the points suggested."

Though this was said in a very gentle tone, there was a subtle emphasis, here and there, that made one feel a sharp edge through the soft manner.

"I think, now, we've had enough," said Father O'Toole. "Ye say y'ave made no insinuation; and, indeed, I don't know how anny one would make them, after hearing himself; and sure, Father Ignatius, can't ye say the same, when y'are after hearing him read the paper a while ago?"

“If Father Nicholas had thought fit to make—(what I have not asked, but what the case appears to ask)—as full a disclaimer as I have made, myself, I should take his word for it; but, in the mean time, knowing, as I do, sufficient evidence to carry an appearance of probability with it, I must reserve my opinion. I should scarcely suppose that the publication of that paper,—omitting the two or three important words that would assure the reader of the Deponent’s *never* having had any control over the missing, or known of her whereabouts,—would satisfy the public, or her friends.”

“To apply your rule,” said Father Nicholas, “I might say that you seem to be in the confidence of those without; to have sat ‘*in ecclesia malignantium* ;’ but I think with the Very Reverend Father O’Toole, that we have had enough of this.—I shall take care of myself; I hope you will take care of yourself. At the worst, the charge against me involves only an excess of zeal in behalf of the one, only Church of God, and the souls of men. I am clear of any imputation upon my moral character *in any other respect*.”

“I hope so, indeed,” said Father Terence, looking like one who saw the clouds beginning to lift; “but it’s not good to have too much zeal, either; and there’s not a ha’p’orth against our brother, here, unless, maybe, it’s a little thoughtfulness was wanting; and, sure, I wasn’t always thoughtful myself; and I think none of us was.”

Father Nicholas spoke again:—

“As for the unhappy person who has been the subject of a part of our conversation, she has thrust herself into the way of the advancing Church of God. The weight is already on her; she will be crushed! I hope no one else will be caught in her ruin.”

"Is it, indeed, a car of Juggernaut that we would make it?" said Father Ignatius, repeating, perhaps involuntarily, an expression which had been lately used to himself, in bitterness of heart. "I would never be a priest, if, in order to it, I must cease to be a man."

"God forbid!" said the kind-hearted old priest to Father Nicholas's dark augury,—not having heeded what was said afterwards. "We wouldn't wish her any harm, poor thing! But we'll just talk it over a bit, by-and-by."

"Then I won't be a hinderance to your counsels," said Father Nicholas; and, bowing gravely and formally, left the room.

"And I'll tell you what we'll do," said the elder, as the other went; "have you nothing to do with her, if she seeks ye itself; and, if she stays there, we'll get ye away, after a bit; it'll be best; and I'll not ask ye to tell me anny thing more about it."

As he said this, he stroked down his respectable and kindly-looking locks, behind, and took his homely pipe.

"I would rather tell you the whole thing," said the younger priest; and he accordingly gave an account of his first and the other meetings with Mrs. Barrè, of which the reader has already been informed.

He spoke into friendly ears, and spoke without hiding his strong feeling, though not without controlling it; and Father Terence, having heard him, with sympathy, to the end, said, much as before, "Ye mustn't be there, if she stays in it."

CHAPTER XLII.

A MIRACLE.

WE left judicial matters at Bay-Harbor just at the point where the judge, having had both Mr. Bangs and Ladford at his lodgings, had determined to grant a warrant.

There is always, in the public mind of a community excited for many days together,—as that of Conception-Bay, and especially of Bay-Harbor, had been,—a disposition to expect something; and the presence of Judge Bearn and the sheriff's deputy among them, just at this time, occasioned a general ferment among both Roman Catholics and Protestants.

Rumors, of course, were abundant, within a few hours after their landing. It was said that a large military force was to be called out, in case of need; that the three judges were to assemble in Bay-Harbor; that five hundred special constables had been sworn in; that the Governor was coming down; that all the Protestant clergy in the Bay had publicly requested their flocks to resort to the scene of expected operations; that the Roman Catholic clergy had denounced, from the altar, the judges and officers of the law, and all who might aid or abet them.

In the mean time, however, there was no appearance of extraordinary activity or occupation in the judge or

deputy sheriff; no troops marched through the streets; no crowds from abroad gathered; and so the day passed by with no more serious disturbance of the peace than a rough word or so, between occasional Peterport men and others, and, before evening, the expectation of the public had much cooled.

Mr. Bangs, returning in the afternoon, after several days' absence, repaired, like a dutiful disciple, to the feet of Father O'Toole, for religious instruction; slipping off (so to speak) the attire of travel and trade, and putting on the garb of meek and lowly scholarship. Some ripples of the restless sea of public opinion must, of course, make their way into this usually quiet retreat, for the wind blew this way; but, however it may have been with any other inmates, Father O'Toole showed little feeling of the disturbance without. With a peaceful equanimity, he held his place, and went about his duty, as aforetime. All the edifying and instructive conversation that occupied that afternoon, we cannot repeat; we keep to that which concerns and influenced our plot.

After tea, to which the hearty man pressed his convert, the American "wondered whether he couldn't go 'n ex'cise, a spell, 'n th' chapil;" and, after the explanation which was necessary for the worthy priest,—who was not familiar with the phrase,—he secured the key, and left his instructor to his evening pipe.

It was not long before Mr. Bangs returned, without his hat, in haste, and said he "wanted jes' to ask a question 't was on his mind. Father O'Toole," said he, "d' they ever have mirycles, or what not, 'n your church?"

"Why, what d'ye mean, then?" said Father O'Toole, disturbed by the excited look and manner of his disciple. "There's manny o' them in it, but it's not every one sees them."

"Wall, Father O'Toole, what d' they look like?" asked Mr. Bangs.

"Oh, all sorts o' things they look like! Sure, I couldn't mind the one half o' them."

"Can pickchers do 'em?"

"Indeed, it's pictures does the most o' them, by all accounts."

"Wall, I tell ye what,—'f you b'lieve it,—that pickcher o' your's there ain't a faint attempt! 'T must be one o' the pre-Adamite school, or a real Rayfael, 't Cap'n Stiles's son used to talk about, b'fore he got int' the regular business o' painting carts, 'n' wagons, 'n' barns——b't, 's I's sayin'; I guess ye'll think I've seen a mirycle!"

"Y'are dreamin', man, I think!"

"I'm ruther wide awake, mos' gen'ally; but the' wus a round, bright place on the wall, b' that pickcher, 's big as ——."

"'Twas the moon, it was," said the Priest, getting more interested.

"'Twould 'a' ben a mirycle, any way; for the moon ain't up; an' 'nother, too, 'f ye c'd see it through the wall."

"It must have been a reflection of it, some way; ye know there's eclipses and changes; an' some o' them 's very quare, too, an' only come round once in a while."

"I'm aware o' that, Father O'Toole," said the American; "b't I wish ye'd jes' step over, 'f 'taint too much trouble, 'n' take a look at it;—I comē right off."

Father O'Toole complied, and the two went.

"I ruther laughed at winkin' pickchers, one spell," said the disciple, by the way; "but 't'll be a startlin' sound 't the Day 'Judgment t' hear a pickcher singin' out 'Look a' here! I winked at ye, but ye wouldn't repent.'"

Out of doors that night the stars and their surrounding darkness had the whole heavens to themselves,—no moon was there. So clear, however, was the air, that the night was not dark ; and it was cool enough, with the fresh breath of the sea, to make a good draught of it a comfort. The dogs seemed to enjoy it, and kept it in continual stir with their antiphonal barking ; throwing all through it a melody as musical as that of some of the best Italian boatmen, who breathe their lungs as stoutly as they stretch their brawny arms, deforming Tasso's stately rhymes with their coarse speech, and making the deformity all filthy with foul garlic. The worst point in the vocal efforts of our dogs is their remitting, but unwearied and unending noisiness.

The occasional clink or thump of something on board a vessel, or the steady plying of some patient oars, falls pleasantly on the ear in this calm night.

Father Terence and his companion made their way hastily through the dusk over the short distance that separated them from the chapel.

"Here's where I was," said Mr. Bangs, in a reverential and agitated whisper, groping in the darkness of the place. "Shouldn't want t' go 'ny nigher ;" and he went down dump upon his knees. "Wunt you jes' take hold an' lift up, Father O'Toole ?"

"An' what's it y'are afther, then ?" asked the Priest.

"Why, 'f 'taint to' much trouble, Father O'Toole," whispered Mr. Bangs, in an agitated voice, "t' take f'r a man, (an' 'n American, 't's jest steppin' on t' the Catholic platform,) wunt you jest jine 'n prayer,—'n Lat'n or Greek, or what not, 'f ye want to, c'nsiderin' ye're a priest,—can't do 'ny harm to pray, certin' ;—'ve got a bundle here, 'll be k'nd o' soft f' yer knees ; 'n 'f you'll

kip a liftin' up pray'rs 'n' supplications fo' me, (Elnathan Bangs, ye know,) I'll be a kneelin' a little ways off f'm ye, I'k' the publican."

"Indeed, an' there's no harm 'n a few prayers, as ye were sayin', Mr. Bangs; an' it's the Catholics are the great prayers," said Father O'Toole, whose preparations for going down upon his knees, as well as could be judged by the ear, in the dark, were as deliberate and on as large a scale as those of a horse.

"'F ye wunt think hard o' me f' mentionin' it, 'don't b'lieve 't 'll be a prayer, or two, 't 'll do. 'T must be a c'tinuin' on, luk Moses on Mount Hur, 'en Aaron took 'n' boosted 'm up," urged the convert, in a whisper, again.

Before the Priest had addressed himself fairly to his work, but, as it seemed, after he had got to a lower posture, he snuffed the air and said :—

"Mr. Bangs, had ye the incense-boat, when ye wor in it? or what's this warrm smell I feel, like something hatin', I'd like to know."

"Wall, that's curi's; I haven't had 'ny boat 'r ship, 'thout it's wo'ship. Somethin' heatin', ye say? It's 's dark 's Egypt; 'n' I've heard Muther Byles Slack, 'n 'e 's d'liv'rin' a Fourth o' July oration, talk 'bout 'simmerin' * darkness; ' b't 'never thought 'sh'd live t' see it," said Mr. Bangs. "Le's pray!"

Intense silence followed, and darkness most intense continued. The great crowd of a Sunday or a high festival, with smoking incense and pealing song, could not be more impressive. A deep, steady breathing, growing slower, and deeper, and steadier, began to be heard from Father Terence.

Presently a loud crash startled the priest, and he exclaimed:—

“Mr. Bangs! What’s this?”

“’Mirycle’s c’mmencin’, likely,” answered the American, in an excited whisper; “’heard a voice a spell ago callin’ me by name, as plain ’s I hear you; ’t seemed t’ be a voice o’ c’nsid’ble power, but ruther softened, sayin’ ‘Mister Bangs!’”

“That’s like the Praste, Haly,* in the temple! Indeed, it’s a wonder but it ’ll say more t’ye. Ave Maria! gratiæ plena.”

“Haley?” asked Mr. Bangs; “’T couldn’t ’a’ ben one o’ the Haleys down t’ Salem, ’twas a priest. Oh! ’n the Temple o’ Solomon, ye say, Father O’Toole?—Wall—.”

At this moment something happened which restored the intense silence that had been broken, and made even the American a party to it. A light burst through or upon the wall, (or so it seemed,) on which the picture hung. Father O’Toole breathed hard, and then all was breathless. The light grew fixed and strong—a circle like a great halo. The light was darkened by an advancing figure,—it seemed of some animal. It took definite shape and was still, then suddenly disappeared.

“Why, ’e’s got hold o’ th’ wrong one!” exclaimed Mr. Bangs, in his whisper.

“Mater misericordiæ!” cried the Priest. “What’s this, at all! Oh, Holy Virgin! ’Twas one o’ the souls in Purrgat’ry I seen, in a figyer!”

“Why, ye don’t say!” answered the convert.

“’Twas, thin! It’s what we may all come to. ’Twas a rat I seen; its the way they look.”

† Heli, as the name reads in the Vulgate and Douay.

"Ye saw a rat! Wall, I've heard o' *smellin'* a rat; I'm glad 'twa'n't 'fensive t' yer olfact'ries, 'm sure."

"How d'ye be able to talk that way, an' you seein' what ye seen!" said the priest, sternly.

At this point, again, all conversation was interrupted by what followed in the lighted circle.

Again the light was dimmed by an advancing figure; this time, of a lady; and as it stood still and became more distinct, Father Terence exclaimed, in a tone of the strongest feeling—

"It's Herself 's in it! Oh! Virgo Excellens! Virgo Præclara!"

"'N Purgytory? 'Thought yer reg'lar saints didn't go into it," said Mr. Bangs, in spite of the excitement and terror that appeared in his voice, yet finding exercise for his tongue. "'Guess that ain't Purgytory, Father O'Toole."

"She's often in it, then—(Ave Maria! Turris Eburneus! Turris David! Virgo Virginum!)—every Saturday,* (Refugium Peccatorum!) an' other times, to take out souls."

The figure, though not perfectly distinct, certainly did seem to wear the dress and had the air of the Virgin in the picture. Another figure began to show itself, and was watched, doubtless, with fearful intentness; the silence was as perfect as before. It was a kneeling man.

"It's a praste!" said Father O'Toole, in a low voice; and both were silent.

"W' 't looks amazin' like——."

"Don't say it, then!" interrupted Father Terence, with the most excited earnestness. "Oh! whatever 'll

* This is affirmed by more than one pope, upon the authority of special revelations.

I do, at all! To be honored this a way! An' her with a crown in her hand!"

"W' I couldn't stand it 'f 'twus me; 'sh'd go right off, in a minit," said Mr. Bangs.

Another figure of a man slowly appeared; the figure of the priest receded. The new shape came forward, slowly, and as it grew entire and clear, showed itself to be sitting in an easy attitude, with a (comparatively) modern hat in its lap. It stopped. The head received the crown which had been waiting in the Virgin's hand.

"'t jest fits him!" said the admiring Mr. Bangs, "looks handsome in it, too! Ruther prom'n'nt chap, sh'd judge."

"It's ye'rself, *that* is, anny way," said the Priest; "an' the crown manes that meself 's the instrument o' savin' yer soul! Ah! if Father Nicholas was in it! and the rest o' them! D'ye see it's ye'rself, Mr. Bangs?—Indade, I'm thinkin' the man 's killed!" The last words were added as he got no answer.

"'Tain't poss—wh' look a' here! Wall, I never!" cried the American in confused alarm, after a pause in which he seemed wrestling with his feelings.

The apparition disappeared; and all was dark; and in that quarter, and in others, a noise was heard, though not a crash, like that which had preceded the miraculous exhibition.

There seemed a visionary or spectral flight along the floor. There was a rattling and clinking, as in other apparitions (it may have been a sound of chains); and, as in other apparitions, the door of the chapel opened violently, and shut with the same violence, twice;—and all was still within.

The spectral flight was continued on the outside of the

chapel, and even two spectral figures might have been seen crossing the open ground.

"Look a' here! Mr. Frank," said one of them to the other. "How, under the canopy, d'd you git that glass, 'th th' rat on it, in? Didn't know 'twas there. Wall, hold on, now! Must let the folks all know 'bout the mirycle, 'n' send 'em over." With these words the spectral figure went up to the door of the nunnery, and began to knock, earnestly. The moon was now near to rising; and a silver largess was scattered before its car.

"'T's Mr. Bangs 't Father Terence 's ben convertin', Miss Jerushy—I mean sister Theresy,—(I'm all of a heap,) mirycle, over here, 't chapil! mirycle! mirycle!" (a shriek came from within, followed by another, and then another.) "Father O'Toole wants every b'dy over; 'd have sent a lady, 'f the'd ben one. Right over here, 't the chapil! Wants ye all f' witnesses!"

Presently there was another hurtling in the air; and spectral flight of many figures darker than night in which they moved, towards the miracle-holding chapel. The nuns left their own quarters to loneliness and silence.



CHAPTER XLIII.

THE EXAMINATION IN FATHER O'TOOLE'S LIBRARY.

IN the twilight of that evening, as the town, (except for the sounds that we have mentioned,) lay still, a man had been going round, outside the Mission grounds; here in a thoroughfare, there over rough ground, stopping a moment, here and there, with men who came to him out of darkness, and went back to it again. He walked fast along the whole front and a little beyond; across the street, and a like distance there, and a little way down two cross streets.

"Here's a pretty go!" exclaimed he, as he got back and stationed himself, restlessly, near the middle of the front, after examining his neighborhood pretty carefully. "There he is, I believe; he'd be a pretty sentry, wouldn't he?" he ended, going toward a man who was approaching from the end of a cross-street, a little way up.

"Ain't you a jolly fellow?" he asked, in a cautious way but very plainly, "if they had you in the army, they'd make nothing o' shooting you, just as you'd shoot a seal. "What did you go away for? and where's Isaac?"

At this address the other stood aghast and made no answer, scratching the side of his fur cap.

"Where have you been now? To see if the boat's safe?" renewed his examiner.

"Why, Isaac's gone after 'em and I sid 'em, Skipper Ch——"

"Whist, now! you can't remember a thing, Jesse. Have you got my handkerchief?"

"No, I never makes use of one, Mister Gal——."

"There you go, again; don't call me names; but why can't you remember the watchword, like all the rest?"

"So I does, 'Have you got my handkerchief?' Oh! I sis,—"

said the speaker, catching himself up, "you wants I to give the answer: 'Tom Jones'——"

"That'll do; if ever they tells you they'll give you your life, if you'll tell 'em your name before they can say Jack Robinson, you'll say, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but I'm mistaken if you think of Jesse. Well what did you see, then? The ark of bulrushes?"

"Wull," said Jesse, vindicating himself, "ef I can't talk, I can do my work; I suppose I've sid all that's abin sid. However, I sid 'em, all go through this way, and had somebody along wi 'em."

"Come, then, Jesse, where did they come from? Through that gate?"

"Is, an' some soart of a carriage wi'em."

"Good! That *is* to the point: men?" inquired Skipper Charlie.

"Both."

"How long ago?"

"A matter of ten minutes, mubbe, it was; but I can't say how many——"

"And nobody's come back?"

"No."

During this colloquy, the Peterport constable had

never ceased directing quick looks towards the cross-street before referred to, (if it may be called a street,) and just about this point, he thrust Jesse suddenly down, in a heap, upon the ground, pulled down his own hat and giving a limp to his right leg, began to walk slowly across the highway.

With a sound of his footsteps going before him, a man soon emerged from shadow, who coming far enough out of his way to look upon our limping friend, showed himself, at the same time, to be Father Nicholas, and then passed through the gateway. By and by came along two dark female figures, like nuns, and followed the same course, except that they did not diverge in the direction of the constable.

Shortly after, a body of men silently and swiftly came along the street; and Gilpin, saying "Here's the Deputy-sheriff and his men! stay here, Jesse; I'll be back in a giffey!" ran down towards the water.

The sheriff's party came straight up to the fence inclosing the Mission-premises; and there halted for some minutes.

The delay enabled the Peterport constable to accomplish his errand; and he got back again, just as the last of them was going through the gate. He was about to follow when information from Jesse that "he heard Mr. Banks's voice over 'tother w'y, and a great noise," led him in that direction.

Sounds from the chapel, as of attempts at the door, and confused voices, grew louder and were multiplied, and as they rose, the voice of the American began to be heard again, within the nun's building, and a loud female cry, also. Mr. Bangs was addressing, apparently, some one with whom he was walking.

"That's someb'dy carry'n' on 'bout the mirycle, likely. Shouldn't wonder 'f she'd ben left behind, 'n' got accident'ly locked up. She'll keep, I ruther guess. 'T's over t' th' church, he wants you, Holy Father."

"What do you mean by a miracle?" impatiently asked a voice which any person, who knew it, might at once have recognized as that of Father Nicholas.

"Wall, 'taint f' me t' say; sh'd judge 't 'd be more accord'n' t' th' laws o' science fo' you t' tell me. I'm on'y jest learnin'!—The ladies, here, 'v' all gone over t' see it."

"Absurdity!" exclaimed the priest; but the intelligence seemed to have quickened his motions, and saying "I must put a stop to this," he came forth into the air, leaving the shouting female to console herself.

"In the King's name! You're my prisoner, Father Nicholas Crampton; rescue or no rescue!" said one of several men who met him as he came out.

"We'll see about that, my friend," said Father Nicholas, with his usual self-possession, "You'll have the kindness to take me to the nearest magistrate, or, you'll have trouble."

"Wall! That ain't slow, fact!" exclaimed Mr. Bangs, "W' where on earth d'd you come from, Mr. Galpin? Y' ain't a goin' t' take a holy priest pris'ner? Jest leave him 'th one o' yer men, there, will ye, a minit?' Want t' speak 'th ye."

"Confine yourself to your own affairs, if you please," said Father Nicholas. "I want no interference with mine."

"Wall, 'f ye're p'tic'lar 'bout it, I will," said Mr. Bangs. "Look, a'here, Skipper,— 's the' call it,"—continued he, as the constable drew aside with him, "'twunt

be ne's'ry, I guess, f' you to go a searchin' th' buildin'. I've jest ben all through it, fr'm top to toe. That ain't Lucy Barbury, 't's singin' out; that's a k'nd 'f a lame gal, the' got there,—f'r help, likely,—'had t' take 'n' lock her up, t' gi' me a chance. The' ain't 'ny sign o' Miss Barb'ry 'n th' whole place."

The American's extra official search. was not quite satisfactory to the Sheriff, who directed that he should be taken into custody; and then, leaving the Head Constable to secure Father Terence and the nuns, took Father Nicholas and Sister Theresa to the presence of the Judge, who, with some of the district magistrates, had occupied Father Terence's library.

"Where's the Priest?" asked Gilpin.

"He's p'ticl'y engaged," said Mr. Bangs, who had not lost his tongue; "but you don't want him. He never 'd hurt anybody."

"He's wanted for witness," said the constable; "and you too, Mr. Banks."

"Wall, I know more 'bout it 'n he does; 'n' that ain't much. 'F the's anybody 't wouldn't do 'ny hurt to a flea 't's Father O'Toole."

They drew near to the Chapel; and the stout voice of Father Terence was heard, uplifted, behind the door:—

"Will no one open it, then? I fear we'll never recover him: it was just fit to die with the fright, he was!"

The nuns huddled and cackled about the fastened door; but there was not a hand among them that could find the key to turn it.

"Wh' how's this, ladies? Couldn't ye git in?" asked the American convert, as he drew near.

"And is that yerself, Mr. Bangs?" inquired the imprisoned priest.

"Wall, 't's what uset to be, I b'lieve, Father O'Toole."

"An' how d'ye be on the outside, an' the door locked between?"

"That *is* a question, fact.—They' got me under arrest," he added, turning from Past to Present.

It may be supposed that what had already happened, not far off, including the arrest of Father Nicholas, had not been unobserved by the nuns; but between the miracle, and Father O'Toole imprisoned, on the one side, and the alarming doings on the other, they had quite lost control of themselves. At the word "arrest," they all turned about with a new alarm, and fled again, (*velut examen*), swarming over, to their hive.

Father O'Toole was released immediately, by the constable, and was a good deal bewildered, as he reached the open air.

Gilpin did his part respectfully, making his bow.

"I'm to ask you if you'll please come with me, sir," he said. "It's only a bit of evidence is wanting; and will you be good enough to ask all of those ladies to go along?"

Father Terence submitted, resignedly, to circumstances; and, having had the general state of things explained to him, secured the attendance of the nuns, and then, himself, accompanied the constable. Froyne clapped his hand with peculiar constabular unction and pretty heavy emphasis, on the "convert's" shoulder. Mr. Bangs rather led the constable than was led by him, as was intended.

The party went silently; but there were buzzings of gathering throngs of men, in different quarters, indicating that what had been done had not been done without being observed. Knots of men, also, were gathered in the street

in front of the Mission ; but none were permitted to enter ; and no disturbance was attempted.

The Judge and his assessors met the prisoners and witnesses standing ; and the former explained to Father Terence that he had not intended to take violent possession of his house ; but, if he had permission, thought it well to conduct as privately as possible, an examination which he was about to make, and which involved many or all of the occupants of the premises.

Father Terence thanked him for his consideration, and begged him to do as he pleased ; but said that he “ was astonished at what was going on, anny way.”

The Judge and magistrates seated themselves, and the judge, having called for his papers, laid them open on the table before him, and ran over one of them with his eye.

The Sheriff having been directed to have the prisoners in the opposite room until called for, removed all but Father Terence, who was first examined. It was clear from the examination that he had very slight acquaintance with the little community of nuns, and knew nothing that would throw any light, whatever, on the disappearance or fate of Lucy Barbury. He was at once discharged ; but by invitation of the judge, remained in the room.

After a short questioning of Father Debree, the Judge said that he had seen no reason before, and saw none now, for supposing that he knew any thing of the case ; and he was discharged.

Mr. Bangs being summoned and questioned, gave, in a characteristic way, and, at first, with a redundancy which the Judge found it necessary to repress, an account of his seeing the man and the women carrying, as it appeared,

some person from Mr. Urston's house down the cliff; and of his after experience in the nunnery. The gravity of the magistrates, and even of the Judge, was no armor of proof against some of his answers. His evidence occupied too much space to be inserted here. The substance of it is already known.

Sister Theresa was next called. The Judge expressed his regret at being obliged to call her at such an hour and for such a purpose. She was then sworn, and gave her worldly name as Theresa Maria Seldon; her religious name as Mary Theresa Ursula. In answer to the judge's questions, she stated "that there was no Lady Superior over the nuns in Bay-Harbor; that she was the oldest Sister, and had authority; that Father Nicholas had more control than she; and some things might be done without her direction, and even against her will, if she ever had a will against his; that there were three Sisters; that two weeks ago, there had been five; that on the fifteenth and on the sixteenth there were five; two professed; two lay; one novice; no postulants; there were none of the Sisters sick on the fifteenth or sixteenth; that Lucy Barbury had never been in the house, to her knowledge; might have been there without her knowing it; she did not know her, nor know that she had ever seen her; there was a sick girl there on the fifteenth and sixteenth, and until the night of the nineteenth; she did not know who it was, and did not hear; only she understood her Christian name to be Bridget Ann; she was brought on the fifteenth, at about eleven o'clock at night, under Father Nicholas's direction; and Sister Theresa understood her to be out of her mind. The girl was under the charge of the Sister who acted as infirmarian; and Father Nicholas directed that nobody else should visit her. This

prohibition was not extended to the witness ; but she had refrained from visiting the girl, in consequence ; could not describe her personal appearance, or complexion, but believed that she had dark hair and eyes. It was common to have women not belonging to their own, or any religious order, brought to the house for care and tending, in sickness ; and sometimes women resided, for a longer or shorter time, with them. Some scholars came every day, and sometimes they had had a scholar or two staying in the house. The girl in question had been brought by Sisters Frances and Agnes. These were not now in the community ; they were the two who had gone away. She did not know where they were ; she had not seen them since Tuesday last ; and did not know whether they were to come back, or not."

The witness had not heard whether the sick girl was a Protestant ; and supposed she might, perhaps, have been such. Understood that on the night of the nineteenth she escaped, and the witness had not heard of her being recovered ; but had been told by Father Nicholas that she could not be found. To a plain question whether she had ever in her mind thought that that girl was the one who was missing from Peterport, the Sister, very much affected, answered "Yes."—To farther questions, she said that she did not exactly know why she had thought so ; certain coincidences of time and age, and the mystery that was kept about it, had probably suggested the thought ; that she thought the girl might have been called by another name than that she commonly bore, or had previously borne.

There was an apparent simplicity and ingenuousness about the witness that would have satisfied any mind that what she said was all she knew. She was dismissed,

with a request to hold herself ready, for an hour, to be recalled, if there should be occasion.

The examination of the other nuns was very brief. As far as they had any information, their answers exactly agreed with Sister Theresa's testimony, and they were absolutely discharged.

Having ascertained that the Urstons had not arrived, the Judge proceeded to examine Father Nicholas; prefacing his questions, as in the case of Sister Theresa, with an expression of regret for the occasion. The Priest was not put upon oath; and it was explained to him that "he need not bring himself into danger by answering; and though a prisoner had no *right* to counsel, he would have the privilege, if he desired it."

Father Nicholas looked as self-possessed and determined as always, and begged the judge to explain to him the nature of the danger that he might incur, and to let him know, exactly, the object of the examination.

The Judge explained that the object was to ascertain whether he was in any way privy to the disappearance of a young person, one Lucy Barbury; and the danger that he might put himself in was that of furnishing evidence against himself.

"What if I decline submitting to any questioning?"

"I shall at once commit you to jail."

"And if I should bid you do it and welcome?"

"Of the propriety of my course I shall, in any event, judge for myself; and therefore it would be quite unnecessary on your part."

Father Nicholas bit his lip; but answered that he was satisfied, and ready to be questioned. He would not ask for any counsel.

The name, quality, and so forth, having been given, the examination went on :—

“Have you known the person called Lucy Barbury, or any person so called?”

“I think so. I think I should know her if I were to see her.”

“Have you ever talked with her?”

“Yes.”

“Where?”

“In Peterport.”

“When did you last speak to her?”

“I can’t recall the exact date.”

“Was it within two weeks?”

“That is about the length of time, I believe, that she has been missed. I shall use my privilege of not answering, for the cause assigned.”

“Did you see her, or speak with her or to her, on the Fifteenth day of this month?”

“I decline answering, for the same reason as before.”

“Do you know where she is?”

“No.”

“Do you know where she has been, on the Fifteenth day of this month or at any time since?” An answer was declined, as before.

“Do you know whether she was in the house occupied by the Nuns, in this place, on the Fifteenth day of this month, or at any time since?” (Declined, for cause.)

“Do you know whether any young woman, not belonging to the number of the Nuns, has been here, on the Fifteenth day of this month, or at any time since?”

“Yes, several.”

“Has any sick young woman, to your knowledge, been

here, within that time?" An answer was declined, as before.

"Do you know of any sick young woman being brought here within that time?" (Declined.)

"Do you know whether any woman was conveyed from Peterport in a boat, or punt, on the night of the Fifteenth day of that month?" (Declined.)

"Whether any woman was conveyed from Mr. Thomas Urston's house, at that time?" (Declined.)

"Whether any person has been, at any time, carried or conveyed from that house?" (Declined.)

"Were you in Peterport on the Fifteenth day of this month, in the afternoon, evening, or night?" (Declined.)

"Were you in any boat or punt, at or near Peterport, in the afternoon, evening, or night of the Fifteenth day of this month?" (Declined.)

"Do you know that any nuns were at or near Peterport, at either of those times?" (Declined.)

"Do you know of nuns ever being there, or going thither in a boat or punt?"

"Yes, often; to visit the sick."

"Did you send any nuns, or desire them to go, on the day mentioned?" (Declined.)

"Were there any sick, to your knowledge, in Peterport at that time?"

"I do not recollect."

"Can you not remind yourself?" (Declined.)

"Did you send any persons, or desire or procure them to go, in a boat or punt, to or near to Peterport, on that day?" (Declined.)

"Do you know of the employment or procurement of any persons to go in a boat or punt?" (Declined.)

"Do you know how Lucy Barbury disappeared? or what became of her?"

"I have already declined answering a question very like. I decline, as before."

"Have you sent away, or procured to go away, any nuns from this community, within two weeks?" (Declined.)

"Do you know of any nuns having gone away within two weeks?" "Yes."

"Do you know to what place they went?" "No."

"Do you know where they now are?" "No."

"Where they have been?" "No."

"Have you sent away, or procured, or advised, or given means for, the going away of any fishermen, or boatmen, or other men, within two weeks?" (Declined.)

"Let me advise you," said the Judge, "that any of these questions, that admit of easy answer, you should answer; for it will not only further the ends of justice, but be better for yourself."

The Priest this time retaliated for the tone of decision and authority with which he had himself been addressed at the beginning; and his eye flashed, and he smiled slightly, as he answered:—

"The ends of justice I need not think so much of just now; but my own security and interest I feel quite competent to take care of."

The Judge bowed gravely.

"Have you any statement to make? or do you wish to say any thing upon the subject or matter of this examination? A record is kept, of which a copy will be furnished to the Grand Jury."

"I have only respectfully to refer to a certain affidavit published by me two days ago, of which I will ask leave to procure a copy."

“I have one here. It doesn’t meddle with the main point.—I should be glad to give you more time, and would urge upon you again the importance of clearing up any thing capable of clearing up ; for I shall feel it necessary, as things now stand, to hold you to answer to the terrible charge of homicide ; as I think the girl may be traced to your custody, and you neither produce her nor offer any explanation, but studiously conceal every thing connected with the fact. This concealment itself may be held, in such a case, to furnish evidence of criminal intent. As there is no conclusive proof before me yet, of guilt, and as the body has not been found, I shall admit you to bail in a sufficient sum—two thousand pounds.”

The mention of the startling character of the charge sent a thrill through the company present, and even visibly affected the Priest himself, but only momentarily.

“I am astonished,” said he, “but in nowise alarmed. A charge so utterly baseless cannot be sustained for an instant. I don’t know who is at the bottom of it ; but while it can do me no harm, it will do him no good.”

As his eye passed round the room, in saying this, a hasty look of something like defiance flashed into his face at one point of the circuit, but went out instantly :—at that point the sad, handsome features of Father Debree were to be seen.

The Urstons, father and son, examined separately, under oath, answered readily all questions, but, however tried, never contradicted themselves or one another ; nor did any thing appear, strange as it might seem, showing any participation on their part, or knowledge of the mysterious disappearance. The fact of the young man’s attachment to Skipper George’s daughter, and of his abandonment of preparation for the priesthood, appeared

from his father and other witnesses. At the same time, there were plenty of Peterport men at hand, who knew and testified that both father and son had been out in the search from about dark till early morning, and that the son had been ever since, for much of his time, occupied in trying to find some trace of the lost maiden.

Mrs. Calloran appeared to be the only one of the family who was at home during the time at which the party had been seen to go from the house to the water. She was not sworn, and was cautioned not to endanger herself. This caution she heard twice over and then threw herself upon her guard, like a hedgehog, armed at all points with wariness and suspicion.

She said (in answer to a question to that effect) that she had seen two nuns at Peterport two weeks ago; but then corrected herself by saying that she had often seen nuns there, and "begged his lordship not to be asking questions at her, to get her into trouble; for she was not larn'd."

The punt overhauled by Captain Nolesworth, seemed, at this examination, like a phantom-bark. No evidence could trace one of the crew or occupants.

In default of £200 bail, the last witness was committed to the custody of the jailer.

In half an hour, bail had appeared for Father Nicholas, his two sureties being, one a Protestant, and the other a Roman Catholic merchant.

So the examination was ended.

"They've gone after that punt, have they?" said the Judge, turning to the Sheriff. The Sheriff, having made inquiry, answered, "Yes, and that she would soon be heard from."

"Who went in charge of the pursuit? There may be a good deal depending."

“I’m told he’s the surest hand in the Bay,” answered the Sheriff, and then added something in a low voice, to which the Judge replied :—

“You must make sure of the chief witness for the Crown being forthcoming, *and find the BODY!*”



CHAPTER XLIV.

A NIGHT'S BOAT-RACE.

WHEN Gilpin left Jesse Hill standing near the Mission, as mentioned in the last chapter, it was to run to the boat's crew, waiting at the water-side. Three of them were there and had seen nothing and heard nothing strange or noticeable. Two of their number were off in one direction, and two in another, one way up and one down the harbor, scouting.

"There's the Priests' punt, then, anyway, and no life in her," said Skipper Charles. "I'll bide here, a-bit. It can't be long, if they've got any gumpshion amongst 'em."

Upon the word some men came hurrying; these were from up the harbor. Our constable had his wits about him, more than ever, that night. Before the men have got to him, he sends off, post-haste, for the other couple, down the harbor, and his ear is open for the story of the comers.

The carriage was the only one, such as it was, in a long walk, in those days; nothing for horse or horses, but a hand-wagon, so to say, known every where as Peter Laverty's.

It had gone down with plenty of whispering, but in no great hurry, to Bryan's stage; and there, after much bustle, had transferred its load, or, at least, what seemed a

sick woman, was lifted out of it, and passed into a boat ; the Priest said " Mind ! " the man answered " Yes, your reverence," and then a portion of the company had gone back. The measured sound of oars came on the ear as this hurried report was made ; it was the boat. " Now, where are our other boys ? They fellows must show us a good lead, if they think we won't come up to them. They'll have nothing much start of us, but the best boat in the B'y."

" Are you there, Ladford ? " asked Skipper Charles.

" Ay ! I'm here," said a silent man, sitting on a keg and smoking.

" You know what dependence there is on you, to-night," said the constable.

" I can't say for that ; but if there's aught for me to do, I'll try and do it. Now, then, lads ! there's your comrades ; " and Ladford's pipe was gone somewhere, like a firefly flown ; and next, he himself had disappeared below the stage-head. Down went the others, the whole boat's crew, six, seven, counting Ladford.

" There's *your* commission, Will Ladford—let's see—we've got documents enough for to-night,—the little one,—yes, that's it.—Let 'em get clear o' the harbor, you know——"

" I don't go skipper," said Ladford, as if settling a point which was mooted between them ; " but don't lose time upon it ; some on us 'll do what's wantun. I don't want to take hold o' one o' they things. I'll take helm, or stroke-oar, or bow-oar. Don't gi' me none o' they papers ; I've seen too much, and I've—shove off. Take it, you, Zippity. Up mainsail ! Up foresail ! Brail up till we get out. Oars ! Give it to her, boys ! Take it easy ; we shall want our arms, bumby."

All Ladford's little speech, though we have emphasized the different orders given, was delivered with just force enough to fling its meaning to the ears for which it was intended, and very little noise was, altogether, made by the departing boat. Gilpin and Isaac, passing a word together, went away in company.

The moon is not up yet, but is rising, and, though above them, has not fairly put down and conquered the great, damp shadows that crouch and lurk about.

Out into the stream, then outward to the Bay, all steady and still, and Will Ladford steering, our boat pulls on, much in the course of the other, but a little nearer to the town, to have the weather-gauge, if possible, whatever the chase may mean to do. A little beyond the island in the harbor, they see the rival boat ahead, feeling the first wind but setting no sail as yet; only the water is darkening all about them, as it is roughened up by the freshening breeze. Then, before our men have got into it, the others spread their sails, put off their bow a point or two, and their slight craft leans over as if she were listening to the gurgling and the rippling at her side. Our men sweep on, with a good, strong, steady sweep, and not a word said. The breeze begins to come in flaws, tempting the sails; but the others, ahead, are carrying off all the wind in their canvas bags. There are nothing but little flaws here—but a few strokes of the oar change things wonderfully.

"Now give her her wings, lads," said Will Ladford, and she flutters them once or twice, and then is setting her course like the other.

"She limps a little, to-night," said Ladford. They understood him as speaking of the boat pursued, and one of them answered, "Then she's not well handled, I'm think-

in'." They all felt that their own was managed as it ought to be.

"We're gainin' on her; we're drawin' up wi' her; we shall overhaul her, if we goes on at this rate," they said.

"We'll see that;" said Ladford; "but if we can't one w'y, we can another. We can pull up wi' her, ef there's no more wind stirrin' than this, and they can't help or hender us."

A race of sail-boats in a moonlight night, is a very pretty thing; but here, while the whole land was lying sleeping, what warm and eager life was going in these boats! All eyes among William Ladford's company were set toward the little sloop ahead.

"Somebody's got hold of her that knows hisself pooty well, for all," said Will Ladford, "but he's losin' ground upon us, I believe. There's a strange caper! There goes his gaff-topsail! What can they mean? There! they've got it up again; the halyard gave way. That'll help us on, many a good foot;" and indeed his little boat seemed to be pulling the other back, while she advanced herself.

Both parties were as still as two deep streams flowing on under the night. About the boat there is a constant babble of waters, as of travellers overtaken on the road and passed. Ladford's companions—most, or all of them—gazed through the moonlight, under the sails, at the little sloop and those she carried—dark, silent figures, and a sort of heap, or crowd, or something that was not fisherman, and might be,—lying on a couch, or bundled up, in the boat's bottom—the lost Lucy. Ladford sat up straight and steered, looking all ways, without moving his head, and at the same time seeming to have his eye on any one that looked towards him. With his old canvas

hat and shabby clothes, most meanly dressed of all of them, (and you have heard his speech too, just the coarse dialect of the island ;) he looked poetical and picturesque. If you give a man command, whether it be of a body of men, or of a horse, or of a boat—something that has a power and will of its own,—there is always this interest about him, and the more in proportion as the force and will controlled are greater. One man, a genius for example, full of power and passion, is a nobler object, controlling and commanding himself, than almost any. But to our chase !

There was Belle-isle, away ahead, with its great, deep shadow, making the water look so dark and deep, and, except to eyes that knew it and saw what was not to be seen in this light, there was no separation, to the sight, between the island and the main beyond, or between the island and its companions, Great and Little Kelley's, or however the lesser one is called.

They are coming near the boat ahead of them, and not a word is said on either side.

"Tim Croonan," said Will Ladford, giving to his companions the name of the other helmsman, as if he just touched each of his boat's crew with a conductor of magnetic influence—the sound not being wasted or spreading out beyond. In the other boat no noise or motion of the people indicated their consciousness of any body's being on the water but themselves. Steadily the following boat drew up a little to windward of the sloop.

"Hail him, you Zippity !" said Ladford, and as the words left his mouth, John flung his hail, in quick, sharp voice—there was no need of loud—over the water. It struck upon the bellying sails, and part of it came back. It seemed as if it all came back ; at all events it did not

seem to touch the people in the other boat, more than so many dead men sailing in moonlight on the sea.

"Ahoy, Skipper!" was flung across again; "hilloa, there!" but with no more effect than if he and his were all in the soundest sleep. On they all went again, in silence; the moon shining, the shadows stretching, the water babbling; but two men do not keep along, side by side, in street or highway, if one or both be waiting for an opportunity, without soon coming into communication. So it was here. The boats were nearly abreast of each other, and thirty or forty yards apart.

"Can ye find never sea-room for yourself, but must be coming and taking the wind out of us, intirely?" asked the man whom Ladford had called Tim Croonan, turning half round and then back again. He spoke like a man that is insulted; but this time there was no answer out of Ladford's boat.

"Why don't you answer un, then, Zippity?" asked Ladford, gently; "you knows I want to keep myself quiet."

"But you're the oldest of us, and you can do it best, too," answered Zebedee.

"That's Misther Ladford, it is," said Croonan, stretching out the words, as if he were painting them in very large letters, to the eyes of his hearers, with a hand pointing at them. "Misther Ladford, and nothing less."

"We don't want to quarrel, Mr. Croonan," said Zippity, taking up his office at this juncture, "We've got a little business with you, that's all."

"Wid me, is it, ye have business? This is a purty time and place to come on business afther me; and the more to it, that I think I don't know yiz, nor ever seen yiz in my life, unless it's Misther Ladford, there," (em-

phasizing and stretching the words again,) "and I don't know him too well. Is it me, alone, or the whole iv us, ye've got business with?"

Will Ladford, saying nothing, eased off his mainsheet, or let his mainsail go, a little, so as not to get ahead, but to keep even pace, while his spokesman answered:—

"It's with all of you, I suppose. Is Lucy Barbury in that boat?"

"Who's Lucy Barbury, then? And what's it to you, I'd like to know, who's in this boat?" inquired Croonan. "Give that topsail a stretch, now, so."

Up went the topsail; the sheets of the other sails rattled a little as they ran, and the sloop was beginning to hold her own or more. In came Ladford's mainboom, again, a hand's breadth or two, and another hand's breadth or two, until he was satisfied.

"We've come to look after Lucy Barbury," said Will's spokesman, following up his advance.

"Well, look afther her, then; and take care ye don't miss her, the light being a little dim, ye know," returned Croonan.

"We don't want to mistrust e'er a one; we wants only just to know ef Lucy's there, that's all."

"Them that's in this boat belongs here, is all I've got to say, at the present time."

"But if she's there she doesn't belong there, and that's all we want to know. Will you please to tell us what female you've got there, then?"

"No, I will not; only she's not your's, anny way. Ye may take yer oath of that, if ye like."

Ladford, having the weather-gauge, used it, and kept away a little for the sloop.

"If you run into us, or come foul of us,—mind, if we don't sink ye!" said Croonan sternly.

Ladford said nothing; but his boat was running down the diagonal that would bring her up, before long, with the left, or larboard, bow of the other.

"Now, I think I've given you fair warning," said the helmsman of the latter. "Tell me, now, will ye keep away?—Boat-hook, Paddy!" he said, aside, to one of his crew.—"I say, will ye keep away, now?"

They drew nearer and nearer; scarce three boats' lengths separated them.

"I warn ye, now, to keep clear of us!" repeated Croonan.

"Will you plase just to let us see who you've got?" asked Ladford, taking, for the first time, a part in the conversation. "It's only because of Lucy that's lost; and sure, ef it was your case, you'd want the same. Will you only let one of us come aboard?"

Misther Ladford's found his tongue, at last! I thought mebbe, you'd got a cold, being exposed to the weather, and not being used to it. Now, I tell ye there's no Lucy Barbury here; will that do ye?" said Croonan.

"You've put us off so, we'd like to look for ourselves, if you plase," answered Zebedee, taking up his office again.

"I'm thinkin' ye'll wait till ye're axed, then," said the other; "and mind, I warn ye, if you meddle with this boat, if I don't sink you, or do harm to you!"

Ladford kept on, and came within a boat's length.

"Take you the helm, Paddy," said Croonan, hastily. "Give me that!" and, snatching the boat-hook out of Paddy's hands, as he ran forward, he laid hold of the end of Ladford's foremast, which leaned over towards him, and bore down upon it with all his weight.

"I'll give them one small piece of a ducking, anny

way, that I don't think 'll do any harm to them ;" and, as he bore down, the water already began to gurggle against the rowlocks, along the gunwale, and to come into Ladford's boat in a thick waterfall.

Saying nothing, the helmsman of the boat which was thus going gunwale under, in the midst of that wide bay, at night, and where it might be thirty fathoms, or fifty, or a hundred, down to the bottom, thrust up an oar, just as it was wanted, against the mischievous weapon, and cleared the mast from its hold. Before Croonan got his balance again, and got the wield of his boat-hook, Ladford's little craft had righted, and he was at the helm. She felt the wind, and got her headway once more, which she had nearly lost. As they drew up again, Ladford said :—

"I don't want to quarrel with any man. I want to keep quiet, and clear of all mischief: but don't 'ee try that again, friend. 'Ee can't ketch us another time, and if 'ee breaks our mast, when we won't let it go down, next time, it 'll be a provocation. 'Ee'd better let one of us come quietly aboard of 'ee, and right back again."

The boat-hook took, this time, the direction of the gunwale, and, resting on it, kept the two craft asunder. Ladford put up his helm, and his boat, turning on the end of the boat-hook as on a fulcrum, brought her bow right up against the breast of the other, flinging the latter, also, at the same time, up into the wind. Croonan raised his boat-hook, and brought it down in the way of wreaking summary vengeance on this determined non-combatant's head. It grazed the shoulder of the man it was intended to stun or admonish severely, and, at the instant, he, seizing it with one strong back hand, as he stood, brought the other over to it, and pulled in on it. For his part, the

holder of the other end clung to it, not to be robbed of his own boat-hook, and the two boats now came together astern, both heading up into the wind.

At sea, one learns to do twenty things in little time, and in hot moments one can do twenty times as much as common; so the boats' coming together was not the only thing that was accomplished now. Tim Croonan went, sideways and backwards, overboard in a moment.

All this scene, being managed and shifted by those who understood it, was very short; but a good deal more was done in it than has been recorded. When things began to thicken, a female voice was heard, alarmed, and crying out, "not to get into trouble." Tim Croonan's comrades hurried aft, to rescue him,—(and let it be remembered that fishermen and sailors rarely know how to swim).—The cry was, "Where is he?"

Ladford called John, and, putting his mouth close to the other's ear, said, in a most emphatic voice, "Keep a sharp eye about this man *for SHARKS*."

"Is that, there, the only lady or female there is on board?" inquired he, aloud, as unmoved as if he did not care a straw for the man's life, which might be washed out by the waters of this cold, dark bay, like the life of a tobacco-pipe, or crunched out by obscene and hideous teeth.

"You're a man, are ye, then?" asked one of the other crew. "A man's drowning! Where is he? Where is he? What's that, there?" many voices joined in crying out.

Whether it was that the smuggler of other days had got his old nature alive in him, as things began to warm, or for whatever reason, Ladford took no new animation into him. "He's safe enough," said he. "Look there, some

of ye, forward, and see ef there's no more in the t'other one. No Lucy?"

"No! no Lucy," was the answer. "There's two of 'em, but no Lucy!"

So this night sail, excitement, and bad blood;—nothing had come of it, unless it should give rise to future quarrels. Ladford and all his men had hoped, and hope had become earnest, as they drew near the object of their chase. They did not know how much their hope had been until they lost it; and now they were hardly ready for any thing, so disappointed were they. Has the reader been disappointed? He knew what these boatmen did not, yet.

It was not so with the other crew. They could not be idle or listless.

"Down with that fellow! He's murdering Croonan! Strike the bloody fellow down! Let go of that man, I tell you now! He's holding him down in the water!"

Ladford had providently widened the distance between himself and them, and he had their boat-hook. Oars, therefore, were their only weapons of offence, or means of grappling. Several oars were lifted in the air; but Ladford threw them all up with a weapon of words.

"Have a care, now, friends. I've said I want to be peaceable. Ef you wants to help your friend, avast with your striking. I've done more'n I maned to done, for I did not mane to do the laste vi'lence to e'er a one; but I haven' done much. This man thought to give us a wetting,—so he said,—and he've agot one. Here, then, friend, take to your own boat. I'm sorry to 've adoned any thing; but you brought it on yourself."

As he said this, the noise and struggle, which had been going on near the stern of his craft, was explained by his

bearing round, with his arm, to the open space between, the body of Tim Croonan, whom he had been keeping, and keeping in the water, by a hold of his clothes, from which the man in the water had not been able to disengage himself. Croonan had struggled, but had been too proud to utter a word.

“Give me a hold of your oar,” said Ladford, to one of the men opposite; and, getting hold of one, he held it while they drew the boats nearly together again, with the floating man between them. Croonan had soon hold of the gunwale over which he had been dragged into the sea, and, being released from the restraining hold, was presently on board.

As William Ladford let go the oar, he fell back with a groan, for the men at the other end had given him a fierce thrust.

“That bloody old smuggler ’ll hear of this again,” said some of the rival crew; but, generally, in Newfoundland, vengeance, if sought, is not wreaked very ferociously. It is not likely to be so in this case; but it sometimes is.



CHAPTER XLV.

WHAT FATHER DEBREE WAS TOLD, AND WHAT
HE DID.

ALL Conception-Bay (that is, the people of it,) was restless and excited on the morning after the occurrences of the night just described, and had as much to talk of, as if it had been raining hail or meteoric stones. Indeed, many of its people had been sleepless.

It was about five o'clock, that those of the Peterport men who had been more immediately concerned in what was done, were coming into the harbor; but there were vastly more with them than had been with them during the former hours of the night. Jesse Hill was one of the objects of chief interest, if not the chief (for the constable was left behind); and Isaac Maffen shone with scarcely lesser lustre, but moved faithfully in his orbit, notwithstanding the eccentric attractions that beset him. Jesse commented upon events, and Isaac assented to Jesse.

The tide of men swelled with added numbers, of both sexes, as it went on; but, about Franks' Cove, spread itself, in all directions, and there remained, an excited and heaving mass of life throughout that part of the harbor.

At some distance behind the returning population, Father Debree walked thoughtfully. He looked weary with night-watching, or unwell. His figure was less erect and firm than formerly, and his step less strong. As he came to the spot, where, a few weeks before, he had stood to gaze upon the scenery of the place to which he had come, to labor and live in it, he paused unconsciously; and at the same instant a hasty step approached, and a voice addressed him. He was a moment in recovering himself, as he looked into the beautiful face that had so suddenly shown itself. The words spoken were as abrupt as the apparition; but they at once fixed his attention.

“You’re Father Debree?—Pardon me; I *must* speak to you: I’m a friend of Mrs. Barrè’s, and I know you’re in some way related to her. She needs help; sadly, but will never ask it. Some villain has slandered her character; and I think you may be the fittest person to do justice to her.”

The deep emotion that possessed the Priest, as he listened to this hurried address, seemed, from the workings of his features, to go through many changes; and, among the changes of expression,—surprise, at the last words, was very evident amid the evident pain and almost agony of his look.

Miss Dare hurriedly explained:—

“It has come from some Roman Catholic; and a priest who knows her, can best put down the lie. I think the Freneys know where it came from.”

Father Debree put his hand to his brow, and stood still.

“Won’t you see her?—She’s had no rest, all night.”

If Father Debree had looked at the speaker, he might have thought that she, too, had not rested.

"Do you know who did it?" he asked, after struggling for the mastery of his feelings.

"No, I can fancy; and I think it's one that has done her some worse wrong before."

As quickly as light flashes, he turned his straining eyes upon her, and seemed to read her thought at once.

"Poor, noble woman!—To be slandered, after all!" said he; and his lip quivered, his voice was choked, and tears swam in his eyes. "She shall be righted, if I can do it!—Yes—Yes—I must see her, one moment. *Can I see her, for a moment?—only a moment!*"

It was scarce day; and yet Miss Dare seemed to have no more thought of time than himself: she said:—

"Oh, Yes! Do! Do!" and led him, hurriedly, to the house.

He waited at the door.

When Mrs. Barrè came down stairs, wan, thin, and careworn, with scarce strength to walk, she evidently had not been prepared to meet him.

"Walter!" she almost shrieked, as she sank down. "*Have you come to me, of your own accord?*"

It was not possible for her to speak more.

"Help!" cried the Priest; and as Miss Dare came, he drew near, also, and laid his hand upon her forehead.

It seemed as if the very touch revived her; for she looked up.

"Oh, Walter! *Is it you?*" she said again: "how pale you are!"

She took his hand in both hers; but he gently withdrew it.

"No, Helen," he said; "it is not right."

"Oh! what is right," she cried, "if *that* is not? but

Oh! thank you for calling me by my own name again;—once more!”

Miss Dare turned away, while holding Mrs. Barré in her arms, and sobbed convulsively, at the unutterable pathos and the patience of her voice.

The Priest spoke:—

“Who has wronged you?” said he. “Who has dared to utter a breath against you? Do not fear to speak before this young lady; for she told me. Is it Father Crampton?—Tell me!”

“No; never mind it: I have borne a worse thing. Let it alone,—unless you please simply to contradict the cruel falsehood.”

“But I implore you, Helen!—I do not speak as a priest—”

“I cannot tell; I do not know.”

“But you know another thing, at least. I pray you, as a brother, not as a priest,—was it Crampton that you meant, the other night, in what you told me of the confessional?”

“That is not the wrong that I am suffering. That, I vindicated as a woman: I cannot meet *this*.”

“I do not ask for vengeance-sake;—God forbid!—but to do right. You will not let me wrong him. Say ‘No,’ if it was not he; will you?”

“No. I say ‘Yes;’ it *was* he. I may as well say truth plainly, as leave it to be inferred.”

“Thank you!” he said; and, after hesitating, turned and added:—

“If it be any thing,—if it *can* be any thing,—be sure that I honor you: I *reverence* you,—blessed woman!”

He was gone, instantly.

Father Debreë did not pause any where along the

road ; no gatherings of men, no sights or sounds, diverted or delayed him, until he reached the Widow Freney's house, and flung the door wide open. No one was there. He walked all round the house, and all about the cove ; no one was to be seen. He turned towards the hill again ; and, as he turned, Mrs. Freney was just coming from the gorge. He strode up to her.

"Who told this lie?" he asked, as soon as she could hear him.

"Father Debree?" she asked, astonished and alarmed.

"Who told this lie of Mrs. Barrè?" he repeated.

"Is it a lie, Father Debree?" said she. "I'm sure it *must* be, your reverence."

"Who told you?" he asked again.

"Indeed, it was the constable, Froyne, told me, Father Debree ; but I wouldn't wish him any harm : sure, he had good reason—"

"It's a LIE, woman ! And you took it up, and believed it, directly, against a friend and benefactor, like that lady ! Do you think *that* is what the true religion teaches?"

His manner frightened Mrs. Freney still more.

"It's one o' the clargy told him," she said.

"Whoever told it, it's a lie ! There's not a purer woman,—or saint,—living,—if she *is* a Protestant. She never did, or thought, or understood, any thing that was not good, in her life ! I desire you'll go from one end of the harbor to the other, and say so, and you may undo something of what you've helped to do."

So saying, he left her, and walked, hurriedly, out of the cove.

Somewhere in his way, he heard himself saluted. It was by Mr. Wellon, who asked the favor of a few words with him.

“A report has been circulated among the Roman Catholics of this—”

“It’s an abominable lie !” said Father Debree, interrupting.—“I have contradicted it. I am going to right it.—Excuse me.”

And he strode on. The Minister did not seek to stay him.



CHAPTER XLVI.

THE TWO PRIESTS AND A THIRD.

FATHER TERENCE had not recovered from the disturbance of the night, before Father De-bree entered, hot, and dusty, and agitated, and occupied all his attention.

The young priest wiped his brow, and walked, once or twice, across the room ; until, at the invitation to sit down, he turned round, and stood. He spoke hurriedly :—

“ You remember what passed between Father Crampton and myself, the other day, Father Terence ? ”

“ Indeed,” answered the peace-loving old priest, “ I don’t bother my mind much with past things.”

——“ But those were no trifles to be forgotten in a moment ;—do you remember his accusations and his worse insinuations against me ? ”

“ I don’t remember anny thing against you, brother,” said Father Terence, kindly.

“ Let me remind you, if you please : he spoke of Mrs. Barrè, and of my ‘ secret intercourse with her ; ’ and what ‘ the world might say ; ’ and then claimed that ‘ though he might be accused of over-zeal for the Church, there was no charge, of any other sort, against his moral character.’ Do you remember, Father Terence ? ”

"I didn't give much heed to him ; but I suppose he said it."

"And would you believe that that very man had once sought—I loathe to speak it!—to drag her from her strong, sure virtue? and in the Confessional? and that he has since defamed her, and sought to destroy her character among men, that never was else than lovely, as he had sought to blot her name out of the Book of Heaven?—Would you believe that?"

"Indeed I would be sorry to believe it of him, or of anny priest ; but it doesn't seem the fair thing that ye shouldn't have told him to his face, if ye'll say it behind his back ;—he's in St. John's, the day," said the open-hearted Father Terence.

"Very true, Father Terence, very true ; but I didn't know it until to-day."

"But d'ye think is it good, brother, to be hunting up things against him, even if they're true, itself, and even if he wronged ye, when he's got to answer for them, surely, soon or late?"

"I haven't searched for them, Father Terence ; they came to me without seeking ; without wishing ;—and yet, considering, not his wrong to me, but what *she* has been to me, what I still owe to her, and must always owe to her, what she deserves, for her noble self, and what she might have expected of the tender sympathy of him as a minister of God, and, especially, one knowing, as he knows, her former happy life, and her sad, lonely lot, to-day,—and considering, that to all her bitter loss and heavy trial, this had been added, that vile words or innuendoes against her had been spoken—and by that priest of God—in the ears of those to whom her voice had sounded as that of the very Angel of Mercy,—if then, while I

had steeled myself against her, according to my duty, (as God knows I have done, truly,) while I have never given way, before her, even to a word, (as God knows is true, though I confess my heart has broken,—BROKEN, in secret,) if I had, to do her right, striven to turn the earth, or drain the sea, would it have been too much?"

During this passionate speech, Father Terence, several times, caught his breath, and had much to do to control the quivering muscles of his face. He had recourse to his pipe, and made no answer.

"Would it have been wrong?" the younger priest asked again.

"But couldn't ye do her right and let him go? Sure, I'd stand by ye, too."

"I know you would, good Father Terence;—but why '*let him go*?' If you mean '*dimitte illum*,—forgive and suffer him, though he have wronged you, or have meant you ill,'—by all means! I cannot, as a sinner, look for mercy or forgiveness, if I show it not;—but '*let him go*, if it be to persist in this wrong to her, to do new wrong to her, or others; '*let him go*' to make his character and authority a means of sin and ruin; '*let him go*' to betray some thoughtless wife, or simple child, to sin, and death, and hell; '*let him go*' to plead, in God's name, for the Devil, ——"

"That's hard speaking," said his hearer.

"It is hard speaking; how else should I speak?"

"But how will ye stop him?" asked Father O'Toole, holding his dead pipe in hand, "if it was so."

"He should be forbidden the exercise of his office, and if he do not repent, it should be torn from him!"

The old priest asked gently—

"But what are *you*, to take God's judgments that way?"

“A priest, that feel my own unworthiness, but seek to feel the awfulness of the priest’s office, and the worth and woe of souls that I am sworn to care for; but *is* this God’s judgment, except as all things are God’s? Have men no part in it, and no responsibility? Are they not to act for Him?”

“Ay, but you can’t do anny thing to Crampton; you’ve no power over him; you can’t unpriest him.”

“No: but there are those who can! Let him be brought to the tribunal, and let the truth be proved there, and let the bishop deal with him.”

Father Terence shook his head.

“No, no; ye know, yerself, it’s never done,—it can’t be done,” said he; “’twould be scandal.”

“It can’t be done, Father Terence!—but there’s some way of doing it?”

“No, there’s no way; they that’s over him must see to it.”

“I wish them to see to it; but they must know it, first.”

“There’s some that know all about him, then; doesn’t the man confess?” asked Father Terence, trying if there were life in his pipe.

Father Debreë gazed before him, as if a door had been opened; he looked forward, silently, and then spoke, without moving his eyes:—

——“And he walks free! and exercises his priest’s office freely!”

“But maybe he’s been put on one side,” said Father O’Toole;—“I heard it said, I think, he’s been in high places; but he’s put back, a bit, someway.”

“But forbidden to deal with souls?—No! he has a faculty, to confess priests and every one; and he has the whole charge of these nuns at the next door.”

The elder priest moved uneasily; perhaps he thought of his own neglect.

"Indeed, that's true," he said.

"And can nothing be done?"

"You can't do any thing."

"But I could try."

"No; ye'd ruin yerself, and do no good either. No, no, man; leave it alone."

"How can I, knowing what I do, if I have any care for truth, or God, or man?"

"It'll be right, one day——"

"But in the mean time, how many wrongs!—How many ruins!—How many wrecks!——Is there *no* help for it? Let me make complaint, and if nothing comes of it, at least leave the burden of blame, openly and fairly, where it belongs."

"What's it ye mean?"

"Go to the bishop and complain of this man, and undertake to prove my charges."

"Now, brother, take my advice," said the old priest, "and meddle you not with it; it'll be the ruin of ye, totally, an' ye'll never do anny good with it. Do you your duty, an' leave him alone."

Father Debree turned and paced the room again.

"Nothing can be done!" he exclaimed, coming again, and standing as before.

"Sit ye down! Sit ye down, man!" said Father Terence—"Will ye not?"

Father Debree still stood, and said:—

"Nothing can be done!——Then I must only confront this man, himself, and show him that his guilt is known, and bring it home to his conscience."

"An' do ye think will he heed what ye say to him?"

No, no ; Crampton is a deep, hard man ; he'll never heed what ye say to him. Don't meddle with him, is best.—I'm sure of it."

"I've no fear of him. What I knew of Crampton years ago, in another country, but shut my eyes to,—what I know of him now,—make him what the world would call a villain ; and shall he, in the Church, find an impunity that, in the world, would never be allowed him ? Nay, shall new fields be opened to him to ravage, and new opportunities for mischief given him ? If Cramp-ton ——"

The door opened and Father Nicholas entered, with a flash in his eye and a sneer at his lip.

—"Were now present," he said, taking up the unfinished sentence, "would you dare to say to him whatever you have said of him in his absence, loud enough for me to hear outside the house ?"

"I thought ye were in St. John's," exclaimed Father Terence, astonished at the suddenness of the apparition.

"And so thinking me at a safe distance, you could venture to make me the subject of your censure, and entertain yourself with this gentleman's practice in invective ;" said Father Nicholas, giving himself for the moment a license of speech very unusual with him.

During this address, delivered very deliberately and distinctly, Father Terence held a book open, (it happened to be upside down,) and his hand trembled. After the last word he turned full upon the speaker, and said,—

"I'm not sure that I understood ye altogether ; but let me tell ye that I'm no backbiter, nor I'm no brawler ; but it's not for fear of anny man, nor ever was ;" (here the old gentleman rose gradually from his chair,) "and that

if ye expect to speak here, sir, I shall expect ye'll speak civilly. I think y'are not over me."

Father Nicholas instantly corrected himself:—

"I humbly ask your pardon, reverend father," said he, "I was wrong; but I hope that the hearing of my own name so freely used, will be an excuse for my intrusion?"

"Y'are quite free to come in, and it maybe as well y'are come," said Father Terence, seating himself again. "Will ye sit down, sir?"

"Thank you, sir, I see that I'm not very welcome here, and I shall prefer being upon a little ceremony, if you'll permit me."

"May I have leave to answer his question, Father Terence?" asked the priest from Peterport, with a pale cheek, and a pale, steady flame in his eye.

"If ye must talk, I'll give my advice, if ye'll take it off me; just begin at a new place," said the elder, with an intuitive wisdom that was quite deep, if it might avail. The other, turning to Father Nicholas, said,—

"It's best to begin at the very thing I have to say. I wish to ask you whether you have said or insinuated any thing against the pure and noble character of that lady, who was mentioned here by you the other day."

"Another criminal examination, without the ceremony and expense of judicial commissions or constables! As I am little in the habit of speaking of ladies, here or elsewhere, I suppose I know whom you mean; but at the same time I will thank you to be explicit, and I propose going through with you to-day."

"I mean Mrs. Barrè."

"Have you any special claims to call me to account, if I had said any thing against her? I was not aware of any such relation between you and Mrs. Barrè at this

moment, or between you and myself, as would warrant it."

"Yes, I have. The peculiar position in which she stands to me, I have no occasion to speak of. If she be wronged and cannot right herself, she has a claim on any Christian man and gentleman of honor, and first of all on me. That involves a relation between me and any one who wrongs her, and therefore to you, though you be an older priest than I."

"There seems a trifling oversight there; the Church and her discipline are overlooked apparently,—or blown away; the existence of a tribunal of penitence seems to be forgotten; but let it go for the present. Take your own way, by all means, only come out with all you've got. What do you mean?"

"I mean precisely what I say, and I may say something more. That you insulted her, and—if wickedness could have approached her, as it cannot,—that you would have sought her ruin, at the very moment when you were claiming to know her pure, innocent thoughts, to sit in judgment on them, I am sure beyond any question, and that you have just tried to stain her reputation, though I have not the same absolute proof, yet I cannot doubt."

A sort of color (as much perhaps as his complexion was capable of) came into Father Nicholas's face.

"You're getting along rather faster than the slow pace of common justice too. You're perfectly sure of my guilt in the one case, and can't have a doubt of it in the other, and yet I don't remember that you have ever even hinted the thing to me, who am the only person capable of testifying to the contrary."

"I never had the proof or even knew the fact until to-day."

Father Nicholas bore his part like one who had a satisfaction in the practice of fence; but he argued in a slighting and sneering way.

"For a like reason I have had no chance, you may remember, to clear or defend myself, and yet you believe in a moment against *me*. Has a brother-priest no claims? A priest's reputation is said to be as tender as a woman's, and his rights are certainly as good. There are other places and occasions for considering the propriety and safety of an intercourse against which Father Terence cautioned you; but certainly one would think that you might know the propriety of rejecting or receiving cautiously the suggestions of a woman's resentment."

"It was no conviction or suspicion of a moment, Mr. Crampton! I had some light upon your character years ago. Do you think I have forgotten Clara Wentley and the fate of Mr. Wentley of Ross Park?"

It would be hard to describe the change that passed upon Father Nicholas's face. Whether he became redder or more pale, or both, whether he quailed for an instant, or shook with instant indignation, it would have been hard to say from his looks only.

He answered without violence,—

—"And still another charge! What now?"

"No. That is not the business that I came about. I mentioned it only casually by way of illustration; but it was something that wanted the name only of a double murder: of a poor father by a sudden blow, and of a daughter by a slow, deadly poison!"

Father Terence looked from one to the other in amazement, and gave vent to it in words:—

"Is Debreë mad? or what sort of man are ye, Cramp-ton? or what does this mean at all? I never knew the

like, and I'm a priest thirty or forty years. Murder! and this sin and that sin! I think I'll just leave the place t'ye, an' I'll go an' feed my ducks and chickens, or I'll look in the chapel a bit."

"Father Terence I beg you to be here; I'm saying only what I can prove, I pray you not to go away," said the Priest from Peterport.

"And I hope you'll stay, reverend father," said the other priest; "we shall be able to answer all three of your questions better by and by, if we give Mr. Debreë time and opportunity.—I beg you'll go on, sir; I'll keep my answer till I've heard all. Does any other crime,—misdemeanor, or felony,—occur to you at this moment, to charge me with? or will you gratify me with the particulars and the proof of this last little one, '*incidentally mentioned*?'"

"Of course. The particulars are the insinuating yourself, (concealing the fact of your being a Roman Catholic and a priest,) into the love of an innocent girl, whose heart dried slowly up when she found you out, and killing the father by the discovery of your treachery, and his child's endless, hopeless wretchedness!—then declaring that you had only sought her for a heavenly bridegroom. The evidence is in all or any one of a hundred people in Jamaica, privy to all the circumstances, and myself among them."

"Ah! now we're coming to something; the privy of a hundred persons to a thing of this kind, all absent and nameless, is an inconvenient generalization; but here is a witness known and present. Allow me the cross-examination of him, as my own counsel, borrowing a little from my last night's experience. You say *you* knew this; how long ago was it?"

"A little more than two years, and not likely to be forgotten in a lifetime."

"Are you sure of the facts?"

"Yes; you know very well my opportunities of information."

"And now, my friend, you who charge me with all this two years ago, have you ever told me what you thought and believed? or have you told any one else?"

"No. I confess that I have buried it in my breast!"

"You did not, therefore, in all these two years think of it as you speak of it now?"

"I would not allow myself to judge of it, until a new light was thrown upon it to-day; everybody else saw it so before."

"Let us go along surely, sir, if you please, and keep different things separate; you can't answer for other people; but for yourself you say that you did not see these facts or circumstances two years ago, in the light in which you see them now. Do you mean to say that if you had seen me strike a blow, or heard me utter a sentence of blasphemy or ribaldry two years ago, you would not have understood and judged it on the spot? I think you're intelligent enough to understand, and of your sharpness and severity of judgment, I think we've had some evidence lately. That you have been two years of a different opinion, shows that you now judge falsely. If you had been two years in making up your opinion, it would show that the case was a pretty difficult one to determine."

"I will take the blame of forming my judgment slowly and reluctantly, or even of being for two years wrong, in judging favorably. What I know to-day compels me to understand what I would not or did not two years ago.

Is it not every thoughtful and observing man's experience?"

"Now, then, for your terrific apocalypse of to-day; for though the order of time is otherwise, yet here seems to be the hinge of all your accusation. What's this about, Mrs. Barrè? That I tempted her in confession? To what?"

"Not 'tempted her;' but, what is a very different thing as regards her, though the same in you, *sought* to tempt her to forsake her virtue. Is that plain enough?"

"I'll be satisfied, for the present. Time, place, and circumstance are to be fixed with reasonable precision; how long ago was this? and in what place? and——."

"Mr. Crampton, I charge you with wicked advances made to my—to Mrs. Barrè, in confession; and I rest the charge upon the word of a woman, whom no tongue but that same one that poisoned holy things, ever moved against; and I charge you with slandering her in the community in which she is now living; and I call upon you to retract any charges or insinuations that you have made, and to correct them."

If guilt makes most men cowardly, that evidence of guilt did not appear in this case. The man to whom these words had just been spoken, slowly and with a most determined look and step came forward, and, passing between the speaker and Father Terence, turned round and stood near the fire-place, where he could face the latter as well as the former. Then, pale to his very lips, he said, in an even voice,—

"Our being priests forbids our fighting;—you seem to think bandying abusive words the next best thing; but have a care, sir!—even a priest may brush an insect into nothingness, or trample with his foot an adder."

Father Ignatius drew himself up, and, folding his arms, said :—

“Add to your character of profligate priest and slanderer that of bully, or bravo, will you? and to the sin of assailing innocence and honor add that of assaulting one who speaks in their defence!”

Father Terence had sat uneasily for some time, and now he rose.

“In the name of God,” said he, “I bid ye stop this. I’m older than ye both, and I say it’s sin for anny one to go on this way, let alone consecrated priests.” (The homely old gentleman looked noble as he stood to keep God’s peace.) “And man,” he continued, turning to Father Nicholas, “what y’ave done before, I don’t know; but if ye have spoken against this lady, why d’ye not go an’ make it right? ’Sure, if she was your enemy itself, it’s not your place to do it.”

“She never did him any worse wrong than shaming or rebuking him to himself, Father Terence; she did not even complain of him for his abuse of his sacred office.”

“It would have been rather late to complain of injured or insulted virtue some years afterward, as it must have been; except that the moral sense of the family seems to be deliberate in its motions. She was wiser than her champion, too, who does not know that my character of priest will stand me in some stead with others; and that in a case where, of necessity, there can be but two parties, it would be generally taken for granted that the representations of one of them may be very mistaken or very false, to say nothing farther; and who forgets that the world has eyes in its head, and a tongue in its mouth, and can form its own judgment of his moral pretensions, with this

lady (so 'peculiarly related to him,') at his call, and turning up as soon as he gets to his post."

"I shall not enter into any conversation upon that point," said Father Debee. "I ask whether you will try to do the little and tardy justice in your power to this lady, who has enough to bear of sorrow, without the addition of undeserved shame?"

"Giving certificates of character and testimonials to respectable heretics is not quite in my way; and to recall and retract, or to contradict, according to your fancy, what I may or may not have said about this or that person, is something too much to ask of me. That a person, situated as the one you mention is, should suffer for her unhappy apostasy, is to be expected,—it is a part of her lot, and is a fulfilment of the prophecy—'*Super quem ceciderit, conteret eum.*' She will be ground under that stone—it will crush her into the earth."

"You will not do any thing? You will not do simple justice to her, and speak simple truth of her? And do you dare to talk of the fulfilment of prophecy, when you are putting out your hand to topple this stone over, as Judas might have spoken, or as the High Priest of the Jews might have spoken, of what they did to the Redeemer, because He innocently suffered at their hands, according to the Father's will? Then you must bear your burden; at any risk of censure or suspicion, I will openly contradict you in the world, and denounce you in the Church!"

"Now, then, the war is absolutely declared," said Father Nicholas, smiling again; "and who do you think will be the gainer in it? We have no place in the world, except as belonging to the Socie—the Church; and how much, think you, you would weigh against me in the

Church, which gives you your place in the world? I think I may say, without immoderate vanity, that I am worth something more to it than you, and that the rulers of the Church would so determine."

"Indeed, then, I don't know what way y'are so much better than him. I know that, after a bit, he's like to be higher in the church than either you or me; the Bishop told meself that he'd great parts; and I think he's one thing yerself hasn't; and that's just the plain love for what's true and right," said Father Terence. "He fears a stain like a wound."

The other priest answered:—

"I say nothing of his parts; but it's that very sentimentality of his that makes him unserviceable; for the man of account is the one who takes circumstances as he finds them, and uses them as they are, and goes on, without sitting down to put his finger in his eye, for something he thinks is wrong.—I think you had better not meddle with me, perhaps," he added, turning to Father Debree, with a smile.

"It's easy seen, the day, that y'are a hard man, Father Crampton," said Father Terence; "an' I don't say for worse: but if ye mean anny mischief to *him*, ye must mind that I'm with him; and, if I'm not nimble and quick, ye'll find me that heavy that I'll not be easily lifted out of yer way."

The strong life and excitement of the scene had not left the old Priest untouched. Father Debree said:—

"For myself, let him do what he will; and in the cause of the widow, God is a party."

"Scarcely a *widow*, I should think," said Father Nicholas, moving to go.

"Come, man," said the old Priest to Father Debree,

“if y’are through, as I think y’are, come, and let’s walk through the grounds a bit.”

As they walked silently, the younger priest abruptly turned to his kindly companion and said :—

“I must be your deacon to-morrow, Father Terence ; I can’t say mass, up there.”

“D’ye feel that bad ? Ye mustn’t take on that way, man,” answered the old Priest.

“I really can’t do it ; there are more things than one upon my mind,” answered Father Debee.

“Ye shall just stay and help me, then,” said the elder ; “and let Crampton go, if he likes.”



CHAPTER XLVII.

QUITE ANOTHER SCENE.

THINGS strange and ill-matched crowd each other; the interview of the priests was followed by quite another one.

After the examination, Mr. Bangs had lingered, and seemed loth to go; and Father Terence invited him to pass the night where he was. This, however, he declined. Yet he staid. At last, he said "he guessed he'd look in a spell to-morrow," and departed.

"Didn't want to go 'thout takin' leave, Father O'Toole," he said, as he presented himself betimes on the next day.

"An' where's this y'are going, then?" inquired the Priest, surprised at this notice of departure. (Father Terence was very grave.)

"Wall, I guess I'll be goin' over here to Peterport agin, 'n' see what I can do for 'em," answered the American.

"An' what's the matter at Peterport?"

"They want a little teachin', all round Noofunland, 'pon a good many things. They'd all be rubbed into grease 'n a minute 'r two, 'n the States, 'f they wa'n't a little spryer about it."

"An' what would rub them into grease, then?"

"Why, every body 'd be tumblin' over 'em."

"But don't they do their work well? an' aren't they good people?"

"They *are* good people, and kind people, fact; b't they're pleggily 'mposed upon."

"It's the difference o' government, ye mean; but it's not a bad government we have," said the Priest, who was an Irish one of an old kind.

"Wa'n't speakin' o' that, 'xac'ly. I'll tell ye, Father O'Toole,—I ain't a democrat, an' so I don't like slavery."

The Priest, who knew nothing of parties in America, and, from the word democrat, understood one who was in favor of democracy, might have been edified at this avowal; but how a democrat should like slavery, and what the whole thing had to do with Newfoundland, was not clear.

"I mean I don't b'long t' the Democratic party, 's the' call it, where they have t' learn t' blackguard, 'n' abuse niggers, b'fore they c'n take the stump" —

"Is it stumps they've to take, in Amerikya?" asked Father O'Toole, smiling. "Indeed, I think they must be poor, then, mostly, for it's not manny o' them one man would take."

"Why, there ain't a poor man 'n the whole concern, 'thout it's the Paddi——pedygogues."

"Is it that bad a place for the schoolmasters, then? I often hard 'the schoolmaster was abroad;' an' maybe it's too manny o' them's abroad."

"Let 'em come; only educate 'n' 'nlighten 'em, I say."

"Are the people so larrn'd, the schoolmasters are not ayqual to them? That's a quare case: it's the masters teach, mostly, I think," said Father Terence, who had heard of strange countries; but perhaps had never had a chance at information from a native of one before. "And

they've not the clergy, ayther, to be the soul an' centre of it, an' take the lead?"

"Guess there ain't such a system o' public schools 'n the wide world; why, ol' President John Quincy's educated at 'em; 'n' so was your bishop, there, Cheveroo, 't was made a Card'nal, or what not, out 't Bordo, 'n France;* but 's I was sayin', when we got a talkin' 'bout common schools, I guess folks 'n Noofundland might be 'bout's good 'n' happy, 'n' a leetle mite better off. Why, there were fishermen down 't Marblehead 'n' Gloucester, 'n' all 'long there, b'fore ever Noofundland 's heard of,—'s goin' to say,—'n' ye don't ketch them a settin' down 'n the chimney-corner, t' keep the fire agoin' all winter, 'n' when the' ain't out fishin'; the' make shoes, the whole boodle of 'em, jes' 's tight 's they c'n stretch. Merchants can't make slaves of 'em 'n that country 's the' do here."

"An' how would the planters make shoes?" asked the Priest.

"I'll take hold 'n' learn 'em, I guess," said the American.

"Do ye know how to make shoes, Mr. Bangs?"

"Looked into it, some, 'n I's a shaver; b't 'bout that mirycle, Father O'Toole," continued Mr. Bangs, "wanted to say, I guess we better not say any thing 'bout it, f' fear the' may be a mistake."

"Well, if there's a mistake, we're both in the one box," said Father Terence, "an' if they laugh at you, they'll laugh at me. We might just wait a bit, maybe, and see what comes of it."

"Wall, I guess I wouldn't make much of it, 'f I's you; I heard o' somebody havin' my magic lantern, round"——

"Is there magic in it, then? Indeed I won't have anny

* Chevereux, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and cardinal.

thing to do with it, little or much. It's the devil does it," said the Priest.

"Wall, I wouldn't 'xac'ly go 'n' lay it t' the devil, either. Don't s'pose ye ever saw one o' those lanterns; 't's a k'nd of a thing 't shows picchers on a wall. 'T *may* ha' ben that; I only make the suggestion."

"But how would he show you and meself, Mr. Bangs?"

"*Does* 'dmit o' question; b't he might have had 'em painted"——

At this moment a knock was heard at the door, and a person entered with a low obeisance to Father Terence, and a look of inquiry at Mr. Bangs.

"Good morning, Reverend Father," said he. "I learn that something supernatural has occurred here during the late painful proceedings; and that the Holy Queen of Heaven has exhibited her power in the Church when assailed by her enemies."

Father Terence looked rather awkwardly towards Mr. Bangs, and then said, "It's the editor of the Catholic paper, Mr. Bangs."

"I think I heard that name in the same connection," said the editor. "Hadn't this gentleman some hand in it?"

"Indeed he was there; but we're thinking there may be some mistake."

"Well, Reverend Father, as you were both present, if you'll be kind enough just to furnish me with the facts, as they occurred, that is, after all, you know, the only way of judging. If they sustain the opinion, there it is; if not, why, it falls."

"Indeed, that can do no harm, anny way; will ye tell him the facts, Mr. Bangs, if ye please?"

Mr. Bangs said he "guessed they m't 's well hold on, f'r a spell;" but the editor was of opinion that the best time to get at facts was immediately after their occurrence, while the recollection was fresh, and before confusions had arisen.

"Wall, if ye only want what 'curred, I'll give it t' ye, 's Father O'Toole says so." He then proceeded to detail the facts, and the editor carefully made a note of them. This being done, the literary gentleman read his sketch of an intended article in his journal, which, beginning with stating that "Protestantism was systematized unbelief, and that the Divine Presence in the Church had never left itself without miraculous witness," proceeded in an elegant and glowing version of the "statement made by an eye-witness, an intelligent American merchant, and not yet a Catholic," and concluded with a loyal assurance that "we (the editor) reserve our final and full judgment until it has been pronounced upon by the authorities of the Church."

"If you're not a Catholic after seeing that"—— said the editor.

—"You ruther guess I never shall be? Wall,——"

"Now will you be so kind as to certify that you witnessed this sight, Reverend Father Terence?"

The worthy Priest was a great while about it, and changed his expressions a good many times, but at last produced the following:—

"I do hereby certify that all the above was seen by me."

"'Guess I'd put on, 'not saying how 'twas done,' 'f I was you, Father O'Toole," urged Mr. Bangs; and so he did.

The "American merchant" then certified also that "he

happened to be looking on, and saw the sight in the chapel ; but should not like to say how it was done."

The editor thanked the Father and Mr. Bangs, and departed with his marvellous budget.

He had scarcely closed the door, when a request came to the Reverend Father Terence to allow the nuns to watch and say their devotions before the miraculous picture.

The door having closed again, Mr. Bangs said,—

"'Guess I m's be goin', Father O'Toole :—I think the play's begun."

"Yer name 'll be famous from this out, I'm thinkin', Mr. Bangs," said the Priest ;—"but what's this about the lantern?" he added, looking confused.—"When will ye be coming for instruction, then?"

"Why, my mind 's got ruther d'stracted ; guess I won't go on 'th it jest now. Ye're welcome to those candles f'r the chap-il, Father O'Toole ; 'n' I'm thankful t' ye, I'm sure. Wish you good-day !"

So the American turned his back upon conversion.

Father O'Toole was really grieved. He begged his departing disciple "not to forget what he had learned, however, and to say a good word for Catholics."

Mr. Bangs assured him "there was one of 'em any how, should always have his good word ; and shaking hands heartily, went his way, holding the breast of his coat with one hand and swinging the other.

The Priest called him back.

"I'm afraid," said he, "the worrld took too strong a hold of ye. Take care it doesn't swallow ye."

"T'll have t' come b'hind me, I guess, an' take me 'n I've got the cramp 'n my stomuch," said Mr. Bangs.

"Ye mind the widdah in the Gospel ? She was troubled

about many things, an' 'twas but the one piece of silver was wanting."

With this rather incorrect citation, but good religion, the kind Priest dismissed the object of his labors and solicitude.



CHAPTER XLVIII.

FATHER DEBREE'S WALK FROM BAY-HARBOR.

THE Sunday and its occupations passed, at Bay-Harbor. Father Debree was absent-minded, and looked anxious; and the old priest left him much to himself; only showing, when he might, some mark of fatherly kindness. On Monday the younger walked towards Peterport, pale and worn.

Miss Dare, coming back from an early ride, drew up, as she passed, to salute him; but got no other answer than by his lifted hat, and a sad look of abstraction. A moment after, the sight and sound of the fair girl was lost in him as wholly as the sudden summer's book is taken into and lost sight of in the deep, dark-rolling river.

The pretty road, along which in other days he had gone, observing, Father Debree was walking on, absorbed in thought. The little beach, between the roadway and the sea, received its long line of rippling waves and gave them back, in vain, for him. He turned away to the sweet little valley, on the landward side, where a lone tree or two, an uneven bank to the right hand, a winding little plain, green grass, and that humming silence which even here, so near this beach, can be felt, would draw the glance and the foot, too, of one who loves fair things and

stillness and is not hurried. This was the pretty place of which he had spoken in his first conversation with Mr. Wellon. As if he sought the beauty and the stillness, and yet, as if he saw and felt them not, he turned aside and walked among them; not like a man without a purpose, but like one whose object was not there.

There stood a little knoll out from the bank at the right of the narrow meadow, and at its foot and on its side, grew a clump of bushes, behind which, on the inner side, was a square-edged and flat-sided rock. On the smooth-sward, with his brow against the rock, Father Debreë was kneeling, where the bushes screened him from the road.

Absorbed as he was, and separated from all other things and beings, (unless in thought he called them up,) almost as entirely as if he were within the earthen mound, another separation was about him, not for a moment but for life; one that cut off from wife and child and friend. Such a man, taken from his office and its relations, was, at once, lonely; alone, of friends, in all the world. He might have enemies enough. Indeed let such an one be struggling with questions of faith, and friends are gone. There is no sympathy among his brother-priests or fellow-religionists for striving in the spirit, wrestling through doubts and questions, bringing them to proof of Holy writ and human reason, in the court of one's own conscience.

Father Terence had a kindly heart, beyond his creed: what other priest?

A touch of life upon his hand startled him. In such a case how suddenly the roused body summons back the mind to consciousness to counsel it.

He started from the earth, and it was a moment before

he saw clearly, and then he saw not a reptile ; not a fowl beast ; not an enemy ; not the friendly Father Terence ; but little Mary Barrè.

At first he held the tiny hand that had been thrust up into his, in silence, looking on the child, who, having thus established a communication with him, stood partly abashed and blushing, with her back towards him, and her little foot sliding hither and thither upon the grass. Her right hand held her apron gathered up, holding some burden brought from her walk upon the beach or meadow. A man may take a child into his confidence, when he would shun the fellowship of men ; and so it is ordained of God. A child can often bring more good to us ; for what men want, when they are in perplexity or distress, is to be brought back, without argument, to first principles ; to simple thoughts and feelings.

At such times we look back toward our own happy childhood, instinctively ; at such times, we welcome children.

So Father Debree, the thoughtful and strong-thinking man, stood with the pretty innocent, and, for a while, looked on her silently ; but he groaned.

“ Ah ! child,” said he, at length, “ you’ve found me ? ”

“ Yes, I knew where you were,” said she, “ didn’t you want me to find you ? ”

“ No ; not now, my little girl,” he answered ; but he did not send her away, and soon, with a long, deep sigh, lifted her up and kissed her.

He did not seem to have thought of the strangeness of the child’s being there, unless she were under some one’s care so far from home ; but now, as if it had just occurred to him, he asked her, trying to use a gay tone

in saying it, but failing in the trial, for his voice broke in it,—

“Where is the woman with the red handkerchief, this time?”

The little girl did not, apparently, understand his reference to their former meeting on the Backside,—perhaps his memory had mistaken the color or the article of dress; but while she stood and said nothing, there appeared suddenly from the other side of the thicket, a lady, who answered the question, saying

“Her usual guardian wears black;” in the softest voice that could be; and stood before him in deep widow’s mourning.

This time Father Debree started backward, and, as he moved, left the child standing in the midst between them, in anxious astonishment, but holding up her little treasure.

“Are you afraid of me, when we meet out of the Confessional?” the lady asked.

He stood upright and silent, looking upon her, sadly rather than severely or even as one surprised; but it was only for a moment, and then with a hasty movement, he turned his face away—it may have been to gather strength.

“Is not the time come, yet?” she said, in a voice that seemed to say that Time was coming and going, and it would not do to let the right time go by. She seemed to be making the utmost effort not to give way.

“What time?” asked Father Debree, in a gentle, sad voice, still looking away from her.

“The time to speak to me as one that has an interest in you and cares for you; and to let me speak to you, as one that you care for and feel an interest in.”

Her voice was just so near to breaking, and, at the same time, so timid, as to be exquisitely moving; just such an one as is most hard to be resisted.

He turned again toward her and answered:—

“For such an interest as belongs to a Roman Catholic Priest——”

“*But no more, YET?*” she asked, more timidly and more brokenly than before; perhaps more movingly.

“No! there cannot be more!” he said, “I must work out my own work, alone.”

She put her two hands silently before her face; no sound escaped her lips.

The child ran to her and lifted up one little hand to the lady’s bended arm, and leaned the head against her, looking towards the Priest.

“It is a hard thing,” continued he, “but I cannot help it.”

At these words she took her hands from her face, on which were the wet traces of silent tears, and some of her black hairs taken in them, and with the beautiful look of earnest truth, said:—

“No! that is not so; you mean that you choose that the necessity shall exist: it is, because you make it.”

“You ought to say, I *have* made it,” answered the Priest, sadly; but being made, it is. It was made long ago.”

“Ah! but only God’s Will is a law that cannot change. Your will stands only as long as you hold it up; and when it is against the right, it ought to go down.”

“I know it; I know it;” he answered, “none knows it better than I, but a man may not at a moment be able to disentangle himself of the consequences of his own act, and I am not.”

"And have you rid yourself of all obligations but those of your priesthood?" she said more strongly than before, as if she knew just the weight of the weapon that she was using.

"No, indeed!" said he, still sadly. "I never felt more strongly, that they must all be discharged; but each must have its time; the highest first." No one could mistake, for a moment, the sorrowful firmness with which he insisted, for want of feeling; a woman with her nice sense and quick sympathy, could, least of all, mistake.

"Have what you call the higher a right before the earlier?"

"You mistake me!" he answered in the same sad way; "I mean that the soul must save its own life, before any thing; that when it is struggling through the blinding billows and land is yet far, it must give all its strength to that one single thing; it must struggle to the land. To undo wrong is the first and nearest way of doing right."

When a man cries out of the Deep of his strong nature, the voice is a more moving one than that of woman. His was not broken, but it came from within his pale worn face and mournful eye, and told what was going on there. There was nothing in it like a pleading for pity; there was nothing in it like a vaunt of battling-out, all alone; it was the calm voice of a great, brave soul in extremity. She answered it as such, and answered like a woman.

"You *are* struggling, then?" she exclaimed, and cast her eyes towards Heaven, and held up thither her clasped hands, while tears ran down her cheeks. "*Are* you? And may no one share the struggle with you? May no one be at your side?" she asked, at length, turning

her weeping eyes toward him and holding out toward him her clasped hands.

“No! it cannot be! It is *my* struggle, and mine only; I must finish it alone. I have no right to sympathy; and, while I wear this character of a Roman priest, will not seek comfort where such a priest may not look for it. Nor do I need human comfort. I feel myself borne up and on; and so it must be.”

There was something indescribably grand in the mournful calmness with which he spoke; but there was something, also, touching to the very heart; and of such a woman as this, who evidently felt the tenderest and strongest interest in him. As he spoke, his eyes looked far forth as if they could see the far-off and deep-heaving ocean, though no eye could see it from that spot.

So there was a great gulf between them still. However her heart might yearn toward him, they were separate. But a woman's heart never loses hope, nor counts any thing impossible that it needs; and she pleaded in a woman's way:—

“I do not fear for the end,” she said; “No, no,—if the work be what I hope and think! and I know you will not need nor wish human help.—But have you no regard for my suffering?” Immediately she cried, “No, I cannot feign; that argument was only forced, and you would not take it in earnest. Yet you are not right. Will you still put off my claim to do *my* duty, as you insist on doing yours?”

“When I cease to be a Roman Catholic Priest,—when I am thrust out from the Roman Catholic Church,”—he began; (and these were heavy things, and he said them slowly, stopping there and leaving the sentence begun, but not ended.) She looked at him, and he had his eyes

still turned towards the far-off, deep-heaving ocean, that was beyond the reach of the eye's glance.

She had not changed her posture, except that she had drawn up her clasped hands and rested her face upon them, while traces of tears lingered in her eyes, and were not dried off from her cheeks. She did not break the stillness he had left. The child was gazing up into her face. The stillness was deep indeed. The sun was mounting noiseless up the sky; the shadows lay silent upon the grass; and little yellow butterflies, without a sound, were flitting now and then; while the wash of water on the beach seemed to be against some barrier quite outside of this still spot.

He turned toward her again, and said, calmly and strongly:—

“Doubtless you know the nature of this conflict. If you believe it to be a religious one, you are right.”

“Thank God!” cried she, suddenly, while the sudden tears filled up her eyes again; “I thought so! Oh, I knew it! I knew it must be! And yet not ——?”

He answered:—

“It is indeed a thing to thank God for; but the end is not yet.”

To her it seemed as if the end could not be far off from the beginning, for she, like a woman, looked only at the distance from one point to the other in the spirit, and did not count the weary toil of climbing down and making a way through thickets and across deep gulfs, and climbing up.

“Why is it so long?” she asked. “What is there between seeing error and renouncing it? and what is there between renouncing it and taking up the truth you knew before?—I speak out of a woman's heart; I am

but a woman," she added, checking herself, as if she were going too fast.

"You have done no wrong," he said; "but it is not all so simple. It is a kind wish to spare the throes of agony that must be borne; but they cannot be spared. God's work must take God's time; and there is but one way for man in it—wrestling and prayer. This is not all; there are many, many things to be done and suffered, if"——

Again he left the sentence without end, and looked toward the far sea.

"If!" she repeated after him. The word made it seem as if it were farther to the end than she had suddenly hoped—nay, as if *that* end might perhaps never be reached. "I didn't think of any 'if.'" She cast her eyes sadly to the ground.

"I thought," she began again, "how short this life was, and how uncertain;—I thought that what we put away from us now, we may never, perhaps, have in our power again! What we have now, we must use now. I thought of *that*, and I thought that a wrong which might be"——

She paused, and, looking up, saw his eyes fixed earnestly upon her.

He took up her unfinished sentence:—

"—— a wrong which may be righted now, ought not to wait."

"Oh! I do not mean a wrong done to *myself*. It is not my own happiness that I am looking for," she exclaimed; and, pale as she was, a flush came over her face, which showed how singly her mind had followed its object, without giving a thought to any possibility of misconception.

"Oh! no!" he answered, "no suspicion of selfishness could fasten itself upon your words or on your look; but if I were led along until I could not but throw off this priesthood and abandon this Church, I shall go through every step of it, God being my helper; and there are many steps and hard ones, that you know nothing of. But I would be alone in what I do and suffer; none can do or bear it for me, and none ought to do and bear it with me. You have met me here unexpectedly. We may or may not meet again, Helen. I hope we shall. I have told you, alone, what you have a right to know. My way is not yet clear. If I live, and God leads me out of this conflict to the end toward which I am now drawn, we shall, if He will, meet again, and not as we part now. Wait God's time, and pray for me! Good-bye!"

As he said these words, he turned suddenly on his heel; but whether it was that the sad tone, in which he said words of little hope, had overcome her, or that the deep feeling of his farewell touched her more nearly than ever, she sprang forward a pace or two after him.

"Walter!" she cried, tenderly and mournfully, "Walter! not so! We may, indeed, never meet again. Let not this be all—for ever! Let me say"—

As he turned round again, it might be seen that his eyes were filled with tears; but he was just as calm and self-possessed as before.

"Ah! if we meet again," he said, "it may be for me to open a sad heart; it may be for me to go down upon my knees for your forgiveness.—My way is not yet clear," he repeated, and then said, "Now will you leave me? And may God bless you!"

He held his hand out to her, and she silently took it in

both hers, and then silently released it. Silently, also, the child came forward, unnoticed at first, and held up to him the hand that was disengaged from her apron; and when he saw her, he took her hand, and stooping down, kissed her upon her forehead.

"God bless you, too, little Mary!" he said, and then gently dropped her hand.

The lady spoke once more:—

"Oh! Walter! (—let me call you by your own name!) May God bless *you*! I am of no account; but *you*—oh! what work you might do for God! Oh! *may* God bless you!"

Then taking little Mary by the hand, she led her very fast away.

"Mamma!" said the little girl, when, after getting to the road, she sat down at its side upon the beach, "*is* he my uncle?" It was the same question that had been asked at her in the Churchyard.

Her mother's head was between her hands upon her knees. She answered thickly, through her weeping, "Oh! no, Darling."

Little Mary was ready with a child's substitute, and she said:—

"He's my *friend*, then, isn't he, Mamma? He called me Mary, now; that's what I told him my name was."


Earthquakes and great convulsive changes of the earth,—the slip of ice-cliffs, the cutting off of fertile fields by the mighty stream astray, the overturning of a kingly house, or razing of a boundary,—any of these will find its place in history; but that for which no human record is enough, and which is noted in God's Book alone,—a thing of more account than any change of earth or empire,—is the upturning of a single man's being.

Does any man who reads this know—(ay, some of them do)—what it is to feel that the world of a man's being is breaking from its orbit, and must be heaved into a new one, and there fastened by sure bonds of drawing and withdrawing, and not, in the mean time, between the new and old, to wander wild, and go to wreck?



CHAPTER XLIX.

AN OPENING INTO FATHER DEBREE'S HEART.

 NOTE was brought to Mr. Wellon by a child whom he did not know. The handwriting of the address was strange to him ; and the seal, which was heraldic, was strangely rude in its cutting.

"Who sent this?" he asked, as he opened it.

"Father Ignatius, sir," answered the child.

The reading within was as follows, written with a pencil :—

"He that once was Mrs. Barrè's husband is a Roman Catholic priest ; but he is a man.—That abominable insinuation has been followed up to its author, and shall be put down, whatever it may cost.

"Will Mr. Wellon, for the love of God, contradict it and *flout it*, in my name? Words cannot be invented, too strong to express Mrs. Barrè's purity.

Most hurriedly,

"Castle Bay, &c.

D——."

Mr. Wellon hastened to Mrs. Barrè.

"I've a note from Mr. Debree," he said, and gave it into her eager, trembling hand.

"Yes," she said, glancing at the outside, "that's his !—I don't know the seal"—(she did not seem to have

glanced at it, in opening the note.) By one rush of the blood she grew ghastly pale, as her eyes strained upon the first words ; then her lips quivered, and she seemed nearly overcome. She read it through, for a slight sob, or inarticulate exclamation, marked her having come to the end ; but she still held it with both hands, and pored upon it.

Presently, recollecting herself, she said :—

“ But you must have it.”

In folding it again, she again noticed the seal, but not closely, and said, in an absent way,—

“ No, I don't know this,—I don't know this ;” and gave it back to Mr. Wellon.

He looked at the seal more closely than she had done. “ The letters seem to spell ‘ DEBREE,’ but with an ‘ I,’ ” said he ; “ the true way, I suppose. I never saw it written.”

“ Yes, it's Norman ; ‘ DE BRIE ;’—and Huguenot,” said Mrs. Barrè, weeping, and speaking like one whose mind was upon other things.

Perhaps to divert her attention, Mr. Wellon continued his examination.

“ This appears to be a heap of stones,” said he.

“ A breach in a wall,” she said, rising, and taking from her desk a letter which she put into his hand. The seal bore a well-defined impression of a broken wall, across whose breach a gauntleted hand held a spear. The motto was “ NON CITRA.”

“ It came from Rouen, in the old wars,” she explained, “ and the family added the word Barrè,” for “ *Chemin Barrè*,” because one of them ‘ barred’ the way, single-handed ;” and she gave herself again to her thoughts.

“ It was ‘ De Brie-Barrè,’ then ?” he said ; but added,

immediately, "Pardon me, my dear Mrs. Barrè, if I seem to have been drawing out your confidence. It was entirely without a thought."

"It does not matter, now," she answered; "Mr. De Brie was my husband; but that name Ignatius is a new one, when he became a Romish priest. His own name is Walter."

—Almost the first person whom he met in the road was Miss Dare, and he gave her the note to read. She wept, like Mrs. Barrè.

"So he is her husband!" she exclaimed. Then turning the letter over, her eye, too, was caught by the seal, which she examined more closely than the wife had done.

"This must be a fancy of his own," she said; "a mockery of his name; it reads 'DÉBRIS,' and the charge, (or whatever it is,) is a heap of stones."



CHAPTER L.

FATHER DE BRIE DOUBTS.

THE body was not found; the Grand Jury had indicted Father Nicholas for abduction, and not murder; the day of trial was fixed for the fifteenth of October.

Mr. Wellon made several calls at the Priest's house, in Peterport, without finding the occupant at home. Father De Brie had kept himself entirely secluded; and, for the time, had resorted to Brine's empty house, on Grannam's Noddle.

Within a few days he was again at Bay-Harbor, and begged leave to talk with Father Terence. The old gentleman looked anxious.

"Didn't ye finish those preliminaries ye were having with Father Nicholas, that time?" he inquired.

"I believe I have finished with Father Nicholas, and perhaps with more," answered Mr. De Brie, with an emphasis quite alarming to the worthy elder; and from which, and its antecedents and consequents, he sought an escape, thus:—

"Then have ye any objection to take a step across the hall to the library? and bring——?" but, surprised at the manner of the person whom he addressed, he exclaimed, "But what ails ye, man? Is it angry ye are? Or troubled? or what is it?"

“Can you oblige me with an hour’s conversation, good Father Terence?”

“Ah! now, don’t be calling me good; no man’s good, and me least; but what’ll you want of an hour’s conversation? Take my advice, now; let what ye’re after having, do ye. It’s best not saying anny thing about those troublesome things. It’s not good, quarrelling, anny way, and laste of all with a man——.”

“My dear Father Terence,” said Mr. De Brie, with a decision and force which showed that he knew, perfectly, what he was about, and could take his own part, “quarrelling is not my way; but when I am unavoidably brought into collision with any man, I am ready to meet that emergency.—Will it be convenient to you to give me so much time? I hope I am not asking too much.”

Poor Father O’Toole, who had lived a quiet life, and exercised a gentle sway for so many years, was uneasy at finding himself among these strong spirits of a younger generation; but like an honest man, as he was, determined to take up the duty that fell to him, little as he liked it.

“Sure, if you want it, and I can be of anny service to ye, I’ll do it with all my heart;” and he sat down to the duty. On second thoughts he locked the door, and then seated himself again.

The younger Priest began abruptly:—

“Father Terence, *I’m losing my faith in the Roman Catholic Church!*”

“‘The Roman—Catholic—Church!’ and ‘losing faith!’ *Ave Maria!*—*Sub tuum præsidium.*—Why, man, ye’re mad! Don’t lose your faith!” exclaimed the kind-hearted old man, starting to his feet, and losing his pipe, which fell, in disregarded fragments, on the floor.—

“Don’t be letting that difficulty with this man, beyond”——

“No; I’m thinking of something else; I forget him.— Father Terence, this is no personal difficulty between me and any one. My difficulties are religious. I’ve lost”—— the younger man was continuing, in a sad, determined tone; but was interrupted.

“Be easy, now! Take care what ye’re saying. It was only ye were ‘*losing*,’ a while ago, and now it’s, *I’ve lost*.’ Don’t say that! Don’t say it! Take time; take time. And is yer memory going, too? Ye say ye forget Father Nicholas.”

Silence followed, while the old man had his hand upon the other’s arm.

“Sit down again, now,” he went on, in a kind way, (though it was himself that had risen from his seat, Mr. De Brie not having been seated at all.) Father Terence sat down again; the other stood, as before, with his back to the mantel-piece.

“Man dear!” exclaimed Father Terence, sorrowfully, after fixing himself in his seat. “How long are ye this way? I never hard a word of it, before. Holy Mother of God! What’s this! Poor man!”

As he said this he looked most anxiously upon his companion.

“Father Terence!” said Mr. De Brie, with a deep calmness, his face being, at the same time, pale with the strong feeling gathered at his heart, “‘*Losing*’ and ‘*lost*,’ in faith, are nearer one another, than in other things. To be losing is to have lost, already.”

“Stop there, now; say no more at present. Y’ are under some sort of delusion, I’m thinking. The way is to turn from it, altogether. You don’t make use of the

pipe, I believe? Sure, we can wait till after tea, then, can't we? I'll have it early, too."

"Thank you; but I've no appetite for food. I cannot fairly eat or sleep, my mind is in such a heaving state. There is a hot force, within, striving for an outlet."

Father Terence answered with a cheeriness evidently beyond his feeling:—

"But why does your mind be heaving? my own never heaves; but just goes as steady and as true as the race of a mill, or whatever it is they call it, meaning the big stone that goes round and round. Discipline is the thing; discipline for the body and the same for the mind, as well. Sure, if I found a new thought coming up in my mind, I'd know something was wrong about it."

"You're happy, Father Terence, but I can never be happy in the same way. What I believe, I believe; and what I don't believe, I do not."

"Very good, then," said Father O'Toole, evidently anxious to prevent the other from getting farther in his speech, as if that would keep his thoughts back, also, "sure, it's a small thing to believe. Here's the Faith, for example, and here's myself; I say, 'I hold this faith and will hold it till my last breath.' That's easy saying."

"It's easy speaking, Father Terence, if it be only working of the tongue and lips; but in my case, it could only be without thinking. I cannot say so. I have once thought it possible, and for a long time, have been satisfied with not doubting, as if that were believing, and have not doubted because I would not doubt. It cannot be so, with any thing essential to salvation. I must believe, indeed, if I believe at all. A dawning light is beginning to make me see that the claim of the Roman Catholic Church" (the old priest hitched himself, a little, at this

title) "is but a thing made up of rags and spangles, though by lamp-light it was splendid. Things that I dared not doubt begin to look like scarecrows and effigies."

"*What* time is it ye see these sights?" asked the elder, as if he had found the key to his companion's strange state of mind; "is it by day, or by night, ye said?"

Mr. De Brie heard with the gravest patience and politeness; and his mighty fervor and force lifted the surroundings, and kept the scene up to its own dignity.

"I ask pardon for speaking in figures," he said, "which, perhaps, spoken hastily, have made my meaning indistinct.—I mean to say that I don't feel safe;—I doubt;—I'm afraid of the *Church*!"

"What's the matter, then?" asked Father Terence, anxiously, "What's it ye mane?"

"I fear I'm in a ship unseaworthy," said Father De Brie, sadly.

"But there's no ship, man; y'are not in a ship, at all."

"Ah! I spoke in a figure again; I mean the Church,—the Church,—Father Terence!"

"And why wouldn't she be seaworthy, then?" asked Father Terence, evidently not knowing how to take what the other said. "A good many years she's going!" and he looked up, steadily, into De Brie's face, who answered, slowly and thoughtfully,—

"But oughtn't she to have been cond——?"—He broke off.—"I don't wish to pain you, Father Terence," he said, "but what can I do? This doubt will come!"

"Aren't there bad men in all of them?" asked the old priest, going back to his first explanation.

"This has nothing to do with Crampton,—unless *the*

Church makes him what he is. My question is with *the Church!* ”

And what ails the Church?—sure, if she was good enough once, she’s good enough now.—Y’are not for going back?”

“I must satisfy this doubt, Father Terence, if it costs my life!—*Is it all a cheat?*” His eyes were restless, and presently he began to walk the room.

“Oh dear! Oh dear! Is this what it is!” said Father Terence, in great pain.

The young priest stopped in his walking, very much agitated.

“I came by steps, Father Terence. I saw what seemed innovations, contradictions, corruptions, falsehoods; but I thought that *authority* was there, and shut my eyes, and kept them shut.—Shall I dare this? Having eyes, *must* I not see? If, before my eyes, a man is slowly climbing into Christ’s place on earth, and a woman obscuring both Father and Son in heaven ——”

“Are ye setting yer foot on the Faith?” asked Father Terence, mournfully.

“Faith is not faith in articles, even if they were true; but *in Christ!* not *about* even Him. ‘Whosoever believeth *in Him* shall not perish:’ ‘He that believeth *in Me*, though he were dead, shall live!’ ”

“Sure, ye can believe as the Church believes, can ye not? Isn’t the Church infallible?” argued the worthy elder, in his kind, simple way.

“But, dear Father Terence,” returned Mr. De Brie, feeling, strongly, his kindness, “what will her claim of infallibility do for *me* if I doubt it?”

“But what need ye be troubling yerself to pick into her faith? Why can’t ye leave that to the Church?”

Doesn't she say, herself, that we're all to believe without doubting?"

"Oh! I would if I could. I have tried it."—Here he looked fixedly at his hearer, as if considering his easy condition of content. He added: "It will not do. I must believe for myself! I see it. There is no doubt of it."

"There, now! Ye're coming round. Ye'll do, after a bit. That's well said; ye see ye must believe," said Father O'Toole, his kindly heart going before his head.

"Ah! I wish I could satisfy myself as easily as you think; but I cannot. The Holy Scripture ——"

"But what sort of way is that, then?" asked Father Terence. "If the whole of us would be picking this and that article, sure, which one of us would believe every one of them? but if we hold as the Church holds, sure the Church is accountable, and not we."

The other went on:—

"There's a true Church,—ay, and a visible Church, too,—the Body of Christ, in which we must be members; but is the man lost in it? Is his reason gone? Is his conscience gone? Can he bury his accountability?"

Father Terence heard, but scarcely understood:—

"Ah, then!" said he, "that's the very thing; the man won't be lost in it! No, and his reason's not gone, nor his conscience ayther; it's not that bad he is. No, no."

As he spoke he rose again, and laid his hand upon the younger priest's arm, soothingly.

"Ah! Father Terence," said De Brie, taking the hand in his, "I am going over the old questions,—the same old questions that made martyrs and men of faith in all ages—though I'm no martyr!—the same that Luther ——"

Father Terence half drew away his hand, instinctively, and his voice was a little discomposed, as he interrupted the speaker, at this word—

“But why do ye be stirring old questions? sure, haven’t they made trouble enough, already?”

“The questions are all old, Father Terence; all questions are old; the same over and over again; only new to each man in turn, when they compel him to answer. ‘What must I do to be saved?’ is an old question of that sort.”

“Hasn’t the Church Holy Scripture, and Tradition, and Infallibility?” asked the elder priest, kindly, seeking to lead him back to the old ground.

“Compared with the written Word, what is Tradition? ‘*nescit vox missa reverti.*’ Opposed to the written Word, what is Tradition? Naught!—and Infallibility,—who believes the better for it? We doubt or disbelieve particulars, and think we can believe the general. ‘*I believe as the Church believes,*’ and yet half the articles of her faith, perhaps, we do not believe; when even if we believed every article, and every article were true, that would not be believing in Christ so as to be saved by Him! Add Obedience; will that make it? Never!”

The speaker seemed rather thinking aloud, to have room for his thronging thoughts, than conversing.

“Ah! what’s this? what’s this?” said Father Terence, mournfully, “is it leaving the Catholic Church, y’are?” (he withdrew his hand, and turned away.) “What ever’ll the Vicar General say; and him telling myself, only a little ago, ye were the most hopeful priest in the country?”——He sat down, heavily, in his chair.

“I will not be out of the Church; it is the Body of Christ,” said the other, “and I believe every word of the old Creeds.”

His hearer, at this last sentence, made an impulsive movement of hope, and was about to speak in that mood ; but he had snatched at several hopeful-seeming words, already, and found them nothing. The glow, therefore, upon his face faded, and he did not speak.

“ The words in which Apostles made profession of their faith ; what saints and martyrs spoke with breath flickering through the flames ; what babes and sucklings gathered from the lips of dying fathers, and mothers doomed to death, I will hold, while I live ! God grant me to have, moreover, a faith like theirs, of which one of them said :

The life that I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God ! ”

Father Terence spoke again :—

“ And what’s to hinder you keeping on, just the old way ? ” he asked ; “ and can’t ye have that faith in the Church ? ”

As the other did not immediately answer, Father O’Toole followed up the advantage.

“ There, now ! Take time to that.” I know ye will. Ye didn’t think of that,” said he, fairly trembling with the excitement of his feelings. “ I’ll leave ye with yerself, for a little ; I’d only be plaguing ye with my talking, when ye want to be alone. Ye’ll just stay, and go, and do what ye like in this house.”

So saying, he suddenly went out and shut the door.

CHAPTER LI.

A STRANGER APPROACHES LADFORD.

OUR Newfoundland skies are as lovely as those of other and choicer lands ; although the gorgeous and exquisite hues that elsewhere hang on flower-stems in the heavy sunshine do not brighten the face of the earth here, but have sought the weeds under our salt northern waves and made them beautiful. The sky is glorious at morn and eve in summer, and at summer's noon is clear and high ; and in the night, when the sun is gone and has left his place to the stars, then also the air is so clear, that it is beautiful for that very thing : in winter, it is flashed and flushed all over with the Northern Lights.

In the evening of one of the fine days of September, one bright, strong star was poised in the eastern sky, alone, shining up the open water between the Backside of Peterport and Castle-Bay, and throwing its far-world light faintly among the shrubs and trees. Its wake upon the Bay was not seen from the point at which we find some of the characters of our story, on that evening ; though its glory in the heavens was seen most clearly over the wild, rough headland, half-a-mile away, at Mad Cove. The point was behind Mr. Urston's house, near the Worrell, where the steep descent goes sidelong down

to the tiny cove and bit of pebbly beach. Just at that place, a person who was coming down from the direction of the house, stopped and turned eastward, silently ; and, after a moment's pause, turning again, said aloud, but as if exclaiming to himself only, or apostrophizing the beautiful planet :—

“Star of the Sea!—It shines like sweet hope to the guilty, and a harbor to the shipwrecked ;—like the gate of Heaven, ajar.”

These words,—mostly a translation from a Roman Catholic Hymn to the Virgin, “*Salve, Virgo florens*,”—were said with the accent and manner of a gentleman, and with the fervor of deep feeling. In the dim light, it might be seen also, by one near him, that his dress was not the jacket and trowsers of the planters of the country.

At the instant of his turning, a man who was coming up the sidelong path from the little cove, had come within five or six yards of him.

“Good evening to you, my friend!” said the speaker, to the man coming up. “What fare, to-day? Apostles sometimes toiled a good many hours, and got nothing for their labor.”

“Much the same wi’ us, then,” answered the man, in a very meek voice, taking a pipe out of his mouth and putting it in his pocket, leaving the evening to all its darkness.

“Ah! we’re well met: this is William Ladford, that I’ve heard so much of: the best boatman in the Bay?”

“I’s agoun up here a bit, sir: did ’ee want any thing wi’ I?” said the man, as if he had not heard, or had not understood.

“Yes; since we’ve met, I should like a moment’s talk

with you. I think I know something that may be a good deal for your advantage."

The gentleman, accidentally or designedly, put his cane across the path, against a little fur-tree or bush, working it in his hands as he spoke.

"Mubbe, this 'am' person, hereaway, abeam of us," said the fisherman (turning to the right hand as he spoke, though he had not seemed to look in that direction before); "mubbe 'e belongs to 'ee, sir; do 'e?"

"I didn't notice him," answered the gentleman. "There was a man to keep me company going home from Mr. Urston's, here; he'll know my voice, if it's he."

So saying, he called:—"Who's there?"

No answer was given, and the figure moved away hastily, and disappeared.

"Ef ee'll be so good as excuse me, for a spurt, I'll go down and make the punt all right, sir. The wind's like to come up here out o' Nothe-east, bum-bye, accord'n as the moon rises.—It isn' right to ax a gen'leman o' your soart to wait upon the like of I;" he added, hesitating, for manners' sake.

"Can I help you about the boat?" asked the gentleman, in a hearty way that would be very taking with most fishermen.

"Thank'ee, sir, I'll do very well alone;" answered the man, turning and going, with a quick, light step, down the sloping turf, and then down the rocky ledge that makes the path athwart the cliff.

In the black amphitheatre broken out of the rock, he was soon lost. The moon, to whose rising he had referred, was coming, but was not yet come; and though the light began to spread itself out before her, it did not make its way into this abyss.

The gentleman, after waiting a moment where he had been standing, began also to go down, saying, at the first steps :—

“*Si descendero ad inferos—*”

He might have gone thirty or forty yards, which would have brought him near to the western wall, where the path ends, and where a practised eye could just make out the black, bulky, shapeless masses of rock, across which the broken pathway led to the swashing water outside. Here he stood still.

The fisherman seemed to have gone into darkness, through some opening in it, as into a cave by its mouth. Only the sounds from his operations, now here, now there, made to seem very distinct and near by the shape of the place, with its walls of rock, proved that he was busy.

By the time the gentleman reached the ground above, again, he found the fisherman close behind him. The latter dropped from his shoulder one end of a long pole, (which, from the click of its metal-shod point upon a stone, as it fell, was probably a boat-hook,) and stood prepared to listen.

The other said :—

“It occurred to me that you’d be just the man that a friend of mine wants, for mate of a fine schooner; and I think I could get the place for you, if you’d like it.”

“It’s very kind of ’ee, sir, being a perfect stranger,” returned Ladford, with something that sounded like irony.

“Nobody’s a stranger to me; my office makes me every man’s friend: I’m a clergyman. Besides, I happen to know more of you than you think; *I know that case of Abernethy.*”

“Do ’ee, now, sir?” said Ladford, in a very stolid

way ; "I've ahard 'e'd a many cases. 'E was a great doctor, wasn' 'e?"

"Pardon me," said the Clergyman, severely ; "I'm not in the habit of wasting words, or trifling." He then softened his voice, and added, "but I won't blame you ; you're used to being on your guard, and think, perhaps, I'm not sure of my man. I'll show you : Warrener Lane, you've heard of, I think. I know him ; and I know what happened in the hold of the 'Guernsey Light,' on the Fourteenth day of December, Fifteen years ago."

"If 'ee do, then," said Ladford, in better speech than he had yet used, "you know no harm of me in it."

"Don't be afraid, my friend ; I don't bring this up as an accuser," said the Clergyman. "I mentioned it only to show that I knew you.—I know about Susan Barbury, too, and the child," he added, in a low and gentle voice. "You see I know more than one thing about you."

Ladford moved on his feet, but was silent.

"I feel the more interested in you, for what I know ; and if I can serve you, shall be rejoiced. What do you think of the place I speak of ; the 'berth,' as I suppose you'd call it?"

"Thank 'ee, sir ; I believe I'll stay where I am a while.—I don't care much about places," said the fisherman.

"I understand your case, you know ; and I assure you there'd be no danger. We can take care,—you'd be secure, I mean,—and a pardon might be got out from the Crown, too, and then you'd be free."

"Thank 'ee, sir ; I believe I won't try the place, if it's the same to you."

"Really," said the Clergyman, with feeling, "you ought

not to be in this condition of perpetual fear ; your pardon ought to be got. You've a title to it, I'm sure."

"I don't need any thing done for me, sir, thank ye."

"Ah! you've got friends engaged about it? Very well; it ought to be so. A man like you oughtn't to be wasted."

"I don't say that; I don't speak of pardons. I want God's pardon."

"I'm glad to hear you say that," said the Clergyman. "That's the great thing, indeed; the other is of comparatively little consequence; though here's a man that, if he chooses to give you up——"

Ladford's eyes, as the rising light of the moon showed, looked sharply into the shadow of the house, where the other figure had before appeared and disappeared; his companion continued:—

"Any man, I mean, can get the price set upon you, if he chooses to give you up, just as he could get the price of a seal's pelt for the shooting; and that's a pretty hard case."

"It's a pretty hard case for one that's in it; but I think it isn't mine, sir," said Ladford.

"I speak only as a friend; but you know your own case. Only, *let me advise you not to trust too much to your neighbors' good-will*, said the Clergyman, significantly.

At this, the former smuggler looked into the face of his companion, who stood with his square back to the moon.

"You're a minister, you say, sir?" he asked.

"Yes," answered the Clergyman, briefly.

"It's good there's a better world than this, if a man can only get to it," said Ladford, again.

The splendid star looked farther off, now that the moon was shining in the sky ; but the great dark sea swashing at the foot of the cliffs, and the great dark land, over which the wind was blowing, and the vast silence from all human things, seemed less of kin to the human heart than the sights and sounds of day. It was a time for thinking of things that are not of the earth.

"It is, indeed !" answered the Minister, solemnly, to the fisherman's last words. "'God's pardon,' as you said, is the great thing. I wish you only knew that pardon *Here* is pardon *There* !"

"I think there's no better way than '*Repent, and believe the Gospel?*'" said Ladford, inquiringly.

"Yes, there *is* a better way.—You know what it is to have a quittance, when you've paid a debt ; so you might have a quittance when you pay the debt to God. Why need a man be doubting or despairing all his life, and never knowing whether he's in the way to heaven or to hell ? Isn't there a promise, '*Whosoever sins YE remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins YE retain, they are retained?*'"

"You're not a Church-minister, I think, sir ?"

"Yes ; though not a Church-of-*England*-minister. I'm sorry for the Church of England ;—I won't abuse it ;—I'm sorry that it has neither the will nor the power to cure the sickness of the soul. It cannot say to the penitent, '*Go, thy sins are forgiven thee !*' It looks so like a Church, I'm sorry it isn't a Church !"

The moon had spread her splendor over the sky as they talked.

"Do you see me strike off that twig of laurel, or whatever it is ?" continued the speaker, smiting, with a sudden, sharp stroke of his stick. "That's the thing for a

man that feels the burden of sin. Or did you ever turn in, in a heavy blow near shore, and fall asleep, expecting to be roused any moment to handle the ship, and wake up with the little ripples tinkling under the counter; and, when you came on deck, see the bright sun, and green fields, and trees, and hedge-rows, in a safe harbor?"

"I don't suppose I ever turned in, in a gale of wind on the coast!" answered the man of the sea. "But," he added, "I know what it is to get into a land-locked harbor, after knocking about, outside."

"Yes;—I'm no sailor or fisherman;—but you can think what spiritual peace, and a safe harbor for the soul would be."

"Yes, indeed, sir; I hope I've known that, too, thank God!"

"I wish it were so; it's not a thing to deceive one's self in; there's one way;—alas! *there is but one way!*"

"Your way won't do without repentance, I suppose, sir?"

"No; but, then, we're the judges of repentance," said the Clergyman.

"And you may make a mistake!—I believe the Church-Ministers have got all the power that anybody's got, from the Lord," said Ladford, more warmly; "and here's my promise: '*He that believeth in me, though he was dead, yet he shall live!*' and that dear, sweet hymn tells us about the harbor:—

'Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high!—'

"But how do you know *when* you believe enough to have your sins forgiven? You're in the dark, you see."

“I can steer by compass,” said Ladford. “‘*Christ shall give thee light,*’ the Bible says. I always heard that when God gave a man sorrow for his sins, and gave him grace to keep from them, then a man might know he was forgiven; and that ’ll do for me I hope.—I hope it will!”

“‘The Bible says!’” repeated the other, but in a restrained voice. “The Bible says, ‘*Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die!*’ But I don’t mean to draw you into an argument.—No, no; no, no.—So you won’t let me serve you, in any way?”

The fair moon was swinging herself steadily up, toward the top of heaven, during all this time; the physical darkness between these two men had been steadily lessening, and the shadows in the abyss below them, and the little thickets of ‘goold,’ and other bushes and small trees, were fain, under the eye of the great queen of heaven, to draw themselves in, closer and closer. All outward nature seemed to be opening its bosom.

“Thank ye, sir; I shouldn’t like to trouble ye.—I believe it’s Father Nicholas; isn’t it?” said Ladford.

“Yes; I shouldn’t have told you till you asked, though it might have given me credit with you, and made my poor offer for your service the more valuable. I’m the priest that they’re trying to make out a murderer, or cannibal, or kidnapper, at least. I believe you’ve some evidence; and, by getting your pardon, I should be making your evidence—(if you have any)—worth something; for it’s worth nothing now. I’ve no worse disposition than that. Your case is a deeply interesting one; and I couldn’t but feel it so, knowing it thoroughly as I do.”

“Did you think I wouldn’t go and testify against you, after your doing all that for me?” asked Ladford.

"That would rest with God; we musn't bargain. *'Freely we have received; freely we give.'*"

Ladford, at this point, drew himself up.

"I believe I'll just keep myself to myself, for the present," said he, shouldering his boat-hook.

"Very good; take care of yourself, then!" said Father Nicholas, and turned to move away; but his place was likely to be filled by two men, who made their appearance as the priest had said the last few words, in a little louder tone than he had been speaking in, and who came, at an easy walk, from the eastern end of the house, one of them whistling. They both touched their hats, without any other salutation, as they passed the priest now going up the same path by which they were coming to the scene of the late conversation.

"I must wish *you* a Good-evenun, too," said Ladford, as they got within thirty feet of him, "so well as the t'other gentleman;" and he began backing down the grassy slope towards the break in the rock, when two other men appeared, coming more leisurely down the path.

"It's too much throuble for ye, Misther Ladford," said one of the advancing men. "Mebbe you won't mind one Tim Croonan, that hasn't forgot yerself, anny way, nor isn't likely to, ayther, I'm thinkin'."

Ladford turned, and, at a steady gait, continued his course toward the water.

"The old fox is going down to his hole," said the one of the foremost men who had not yet spoken; and both quickened their steps. They were, at this moment, at about the same distance from the man they were following as

at first; for, though they were coming fast, yet the old smuggler had a very rapid way of getting on, without apparent effort.

He was on the ledge of rock that sloped down athwart the precipice; the moon was lighting up, beautifully, the western side of the picturesque little place, and part of the bottom, while it left in deep shadow that to the east, and the landward side, as if they were yet in the block from which the others—with their rounds, and flats, and hollows, and deep crevices—had been cut.

“We’ve got good hould of him now,” continued the last speaker, as Ladford passed along this ledge, with the moon shining broad upon his back, and showing even the uncouth outlines of his dress. He turned once more upon this narrow path, despite the nearness of his pursuers; and as he did so, the man who had just spoken, drew back and held back his companion with his hand, saying, in a low voice:—

“Don’t crowd him! Give him time, and he’ll hang himself all the harder.”

Croonan had been by no means crowding; and he stood still very readily.

It seemed madness for the man, if he had any occasion to fear these two pursuers, and wished to escape them, to loiter, as he seemed about to do, in his flight. At the best he must go down, and there was no other way up than that he was descending; the wall which his path traversed obliquely downwards, was, except that path, as sheer and steep as masonry. So was the western side of the amphitheatre. Below, to be sure, was the water, and all these fishermen take to the water like seals—if they have but something to put between them and it. If he could reach the water—and launch his punt, moreover,

—before both or either of these two could overtake him — : then what ?

“Is it kind or neighborly of ’ee?” asked Ladford, “to come about the business you’re on?” stopping almost within their very reach.

The first speaker, Croonan, spoke first, now, in answer, and leisurely, too, as one who knew well that the man they were after would gain nothing in the end by stopping to parley here.

“It’s meself that’s afther getting good rason to wish longer acquainten wid ye,” said he, in an easy way, and not very unkind, either.

“That’s not it. I wouldn’ run aw’y for that,” said Ladford. “I’ve sid the time —” he was going on as if he saw the same time now; but he checked himself instantly. “I’ll bide off from a quarrel, and I’ll never fight except to save myself, and then not harder nor longer than what’s aneedun. I’ve seed enough o’ quarrellin’ —”

“Oh! ye’re a precious light o’ the gospel, I suppose,” interrupted Croonan’s companion. “When ye’re done praching, ye’ll be the better of sthretching yer legs a bit, in case ye’d be forgettin’ what to do wid thim, yer tongue is that quick.”

The former smuggler took his leave of them in quite a different tone :—

“I’m sorry ye want to hunt me down; but I forgive ’ee,” said he.

“We’ll give you more rason for it, afther a bit, then,” cried Froyne.

“Ah! now,” said one of the two hindmost men, speaking in a restrained voice, as if afraid of being overheard, “don’t be too hard upon a poor fellow !”

"I've no gridge against the man," said Croonan, whose heart was not a bad one, "nor I don't wish to crowd um. Give um a chancee, Froyne."

"Thank you for your good will, Mr. Duggan," said the hunted man.

Ladford now recommenced his descent with more alacrity than before; and suddenly, when he had got within a third of the distance to the end of the ledge, he set his boat-hook out upon the top of one of the rocks that stood about half way between him and the water, and leaped off.

"He's killing himself!" cried Froyne, who was foremost; and the two stopped in their descent, to see him fall among the rocks which filled about half the bottom of the little amphitheatre on the west side. Of course it was but a few seconds, and then, instead of a dull crash, came a splash in the water, which explained the manœuvre; with his long pole he had made such a flying leap as had saved him a minute or so of slow work.

"Now's your chance man! Go on, Froyne!" shouted Croonan. "Give a lep with yer constable's stick, and bate the boat-hook." But the speaker himself was less in a hurry.

"Come on, then, and let's get him out o' the wather, the great tom-cod that he is!" said Froyne the constable, (for so it was,) "till I'll clap my ten claws upon um."

The constable ran down the path and scrambled, as fast as might be, over the rocks, and Croonan followed; but long before they got half way over them, Ladford was in his punt and sculling silently out, and with a little sail set as a hare sets its scut over its back, in its race for life.

"That's a game two can play at," cried Froyne, "and two'll make more nor wan at it, I'm thinking."

"Ay! my b'y!" said Croonan, at the same moment, "do ye think, havn't we our own punt—ay, and the oars locked in? See, now, wasn't that the wise way?"

The force of two strong men soon urged the boat off into the water; and—practised fisherman as Croonan, at least, was—how long was poor, single-handed Ladford—if he had been the best boatman in Newfoundland—to hold his own against the two?

Their precaution had made their oars secure; for the fugitive had had no time to pick or practise upon locks; their sail was there all safe, and they were presently following.

As Froyne seated himself at the bow-oar, while Croonan took the other to scull, they both exclaimed, "What water's this?"

"Arrunt we on the wrong side iv the boat, someway?" asked the constable.

"Ah! thin," said Croonan, "we've stove the boat someway, that's what it is, wid getting her into the wather. Th' other side iv it's not so dry as this, if ye'd try it."

"Ah! thin, it's me opinion that it's that ugly ould blagyard has put his divil's hoof through it, or his boat-hook, anny way."

"No!" said Ladford, who was within easy hearing, "I couldn' have the heart to break a hole in the side of an honest punt; and I haven' adoned it to she." And he kept steadily on his course towards Castle-Bay.

The two men in the other boat were in trouble; but all the while Croonan kept his oar working instinctively.

"Where's this it is?" inquired Croonan. "I think it's the plug is started; whatever made me have one in it at all?"

"Whatever's started," said the landsman, "I'm thinkin there'll be small odds bechux the inside and the outside iv it, shortly, and it's meself would sooner swim in clear wather. Can't we lift the boat someway?"

"Can't ye swim and pussh the boat?" cried Mr. Duggan, (still not over loud,) as he and his companion laughed at the expedition.

"Can't you put your fut on it?" called Croonan. "Put yer big fut over the hole!"

"Sure, can I put my fut down on the summit o' the say? Do ye think is my leg long enough?" inquired the constable. "Do ye now? An' that's what I'd have to do, to keep it all out."

"Clap a tole-pin in, then, can't ye? See, that's wan that ye're rowing against," cried the fisherman.

"Indade, thin, and it's against my will that I'm rowin', just; and how will I find the hole, more nor the hole iv the ocean, supposin' I could start the tall-pin, itself?"

"What'll we do at ahl, thin?" said Croonan, again. "Sure, we'll have to put back and stop it." The constable, mean time, in his effort at the thole-pin, had jerked himself backward into a wet seat, with a splash.

"There's wan o' them 's taken good advice, anny way," said Mr. Duggan, laughing.

The constable rose up from his misadventure, and assented to Croonan's proposal.

"Well, thin, I've nothin' to say agin goin' back, for it's goin' to the botthom, y' are, kapin' on this way, just, an' indade, I think there's small good in that, anny way, towards bein' on dry land, and only washin' yer phiz now and agen, when ye'd be the betther iv it."

Ladford kept silently on, in the bright moonlight, without a word or sound, except of the steady working

of his oar, and sight and sound of him grew farther and fainter.

"Quick, thin! an' we'll get some sorr't iv a plug, in a jiffy," said Croonan, and they soon finished their short return voyage to the point of departure.

"I think ye may cut up yer constable's stick," suggested Mr. Duggan, "an' make a plug off it."

Here, however, they staid; for there was no stick of any sort nearer than one of the little fir-trees, and it was some time before one of these could be got at; and then neither man had a knife in his pocket that would cut very readily; and it was a long time, in the dark, before they could do any thing; and at length they gave it up.

"Will, thin," said Croonan, the good feeling of his nation coming over him, and his countrymen's aversion to a warrant, even in the hands of a man of the true religion, "I don't owe um any gridge, now; but yerself set me on, Mike Froyne. I'm glad he's not goin' to be hung this night, anny way."

"There's time enough, yet," said the constable.

"Come, come, then, man, and mix a little something warrm wid the watter y' are afther takin'," said Mr. Duggan, "an' tell us what ye would have done to um, if ye'd got um."

There was a pretty little beach, that we have mentioned, occupying about half the back part of the bottom of the amphitheatre; on this little hide-away place they left their punt, where it lay like something the water had thrown in a corner, to play with at leisure. The men mounted once more the path to the upper air, and departed.

Higher up in the heavens, and higher, the moon mounted; and here and there around, below,—as if they

had been thrust down, until they rested upon the horizon, —lay, looking up with bright faces, clouds of the fair, mild night. The sea, whose bosom heaves by night as well as day, urged up its even murmurs on the ear.

All else was still.



CHAPTER LII.

FATHER DE BRIE DETERMINES, AND DEPARTS.

DAYS had again passed by; men's minds were fevered as the time for Father Nicholas's trial drew near; and he came, and went, and was seen more than ever; and people came to him.

The Roman Catholic press was busy arguing that "the whole thing was the offspring of fanatical prejudice; there was not one link connecting the history of the young girl who had been lost with any Roman Catholic, after her leaving her father's house; and the notion of her having been made away with, by Roman Catholics, or carried off by them, would be absurd, if it were not outrageous. As well might it be said, in the case of the Protestant's house that was blown down, at Carbonear, that the Catholics had all got behind it, and puffed it down with their breath."

The Government and the "Protestant Faction" were "warned not to goad a peaceable people too far; there were limits beyond which patience ceased to be a virtue; and it might be found that the spirit of a united body, long exasperated and trifled with, would suddenly rise, in its majesty, and visit the senseless aggressors with terrific retribution. If the last indignity—of confronting the sacred character of a Catholic priest with that of a felon,

pardoned for the purpose of this persecution—should be dared ; if it were attempted to wash out the stains upon that felon's gory hands, to fit him to take part in these delusive forms of law, it might, too late, be found impossible to make a people,—who, though loyal, almost to a fault, had an intelligence and quick perception of right, as well as a chivalric sense of honor denied to the coarser Saxon,—blindly accept a monstrous, hideous wrong, though labelled justice."

So ran the printed opinions of the journals, and so ran the uttered words of many excited groups of men and women, in the capital and in the Bay ; but happily the public peace was more than ever well kept. At the same time, as a measure of precaution, a detachment of the Royal Newfoundland companies, to the number of ninety men, was posted in Bay-Harbor, under the command of Major Birnie. Mr. Wellon's life was said to be in danger ; but he was not harmed. There was no outbreak of any kind, and no injury to person or property.

Father Nicholas was an object of more devout reverence on the part of Roman Catholics, many of whom every day uncovered themselves, and went down on their knees as he passed, much as they would have done to a procession of the Host. To Protestants he was an object of more curiosity than ever, in the streets.

Father Terence neither meddled nor made with the business ; but lived his quiet life as before. Another thing lay far heavier on his honest heart.

Some time had passed since his last talk with Father De Brie, when the latter came in again. This time his manner was rather timid and hesitating.

They talked (not very readily) of different things ; at length the younger man said :—

"I have given many a thought to what you said the other night, Father Terence."

Father Terence strove to speak cheerily: "Was it about the old faith it was?—Ah! it's good to give manny a thought to the old way," said he, not looking up.

"What sort of faith was it St. Charles Borromeo had? and St. Catharine Senensis and the like of them? Hadn't they faith then? And where's St. Thomas and St. Bernard? and all those blessed men in the Land of Saints—that's Ireland I mean; first and foremost St. Patrick, and there's those three with Col at the beginning o' them, Columbkille, and Columbanus, and Columba, and St. Malachy, and St. Finian, and St. Fergus, and St. Colman, and—and the rest o' them, in the early days of that beautiful island, as thick as capelin itself, if I'd use a figure, not to speak of the great St. Lawrence, of my own name,—(and family most likely,)—Archbishop of Dublin, and true to his country against King Henry that time?"

The good man's patriotic ardor had led him a little off from his first train of thought; but brought a solace very much needed to his laboring heart. When he had finished his kindling recitation, he looked at his companion with an eye that sought sympathy of zeal and admiration; but as he looked at the absorbed, earnest, lofty face of Father Ignatius, the glow burned out like an unanswered beacon-light, and he sank back into a despondent recollection of present circumstances, relieved perhaps by a spiritual companionship with the famous men, whose memory he had summoned.

"Father Terence," said the other at length, "if I speak plainly, I know that I shall hurt your feelings, kind and patient as you are; but I cannot do otherwise. The

question with me is not of other people, but of myself. That one may have faith in Christ, out of the midst of error held unwittingly, I cannot doubt; God forbid! But if one see that doctrine and practice are alike false and corrupt, God cannot accept faith out of the midst of known falsehood. How can I rest when I begin to see falsehood written wherever I turn my eyes, falsehood in the creed, falsehood in worship, falsehood in practice, falsehood in priest, falsehood in people?"

The elder man shook his head as he ejaculated,—

"*Sancta Virgo! cunctas hæreses, sola, interemisti.*—That's a long list then," added he, turning and speaking sadly, "and a dangerous one to say. I'm astonished at the spirit of ye! And I thought ye'd leave the creed at the very least."

"The creed,—but I speak of the additions made to it. Oh! Father Terence, the conviction is striving and struggling in me for mastery. It is a conviction, that this system is not of God. This strife within would kill me if I could not get away from it. Woman-worship,—the Confessional, Relics, Images, Violation of Sacraments, Despotism, Superstition, Men abusing the power and character of the priesthood, unquestioned, people murderous, licentious, and unimproved—nation after nation—wherever this religion has prevailed: whatever morality is in it, whether of priest or people, being in spite of it, and having to fight against the corrupting influences of the system itself, in its idolatrous worship and defiling confessional, and power without check unless by chance! the right hand against the left. Even wolves maintained and lambs driven to them! Is it so? Is it so? And who come to it but luxurious women, conscious of sin and ignorant of repentance, (pardon me, pardon me, good

Father Terence, I speak of those who *come* to it,) or fools like me, that for a whim blast their whole lives!"

The speaker paced the floor in the most intense excitement, turning to this side and that, as he uttered these questions, as if he looked across the world and called for answer. Stopping suddenly in front of the elder priest, who with a troubled face was looking on the floor, he exclaimed,—

"Is it NOT so? One word of the Bible!—one word of Holy Scripture! One word for images! One word for interceding Saints! One word for Mary's Kingdom or Empire of Grace! One word for purgatory! One word for our awful taking of men's souls out of their bodies and standing accountable for them! Has any part of the whole fabric any authority or countenance in the Word of God? Has it any? Has any part of it? Which one of the old Fathers writing about their religion, defending it, explaining it, has one word? Which one of the old Liturgies? Where was Christianity like this, at the beginning?"

He paced the room again, his companion being silent.

"If this is not true, what is it? and what am I?" he exclaimed again, holding up his clasped hands. He then sank upon his knees, and remained for a while in prayer.

On rising, with his eyes full of tears, he saw that Father Terence was engaged in the same way, and when the old man had ended his holy occupation, the younger grasped his hand and thanked him heartily.

"Forgive me, Father Terence," he said, "if I have shocked you. It is no excuse that I have torn the flesh of my own soul, in the struggle that is going on in me; I have no right, because *I* suffer, to make others suffer also; but it *will* be excuse for me with you, that there

has been and is no feeling in me towards yourself, but one of love and honor."

"Say nothing of it," said the kindly elder, but in the saddest way, "I care nothing for my own feelings; but I do care to see ye going the way y'are. Is there no help for ye?"

Evening was near; the day was drawing off, and night had not yet set her watch; but while the silent shades were coming in and taking up their places in the inner and farther parts of the room, and seemed to be throwing a dark and mournful tinge upon the very spoken words as well as on the walls and furniture, gradually a brightness broke on the far off hills, as if through a rift in a leaden sky. Father O'Toole was last to have his eyes drawn aside in that direction.

The younger had caught its earliest ray, and had his eyes fixed upon it.

"Oh yes, there is help for me in my God," answered he. "You do forgive me?"

"Oh! then, what have I against ye? Sure it's not worth the while me bringing in my own small matters of feelings betwixt you and Him."

As Father O'Toole said this, Father De Brie thanked him more heartily than before; then bade him "Good-bye!"

"Stay then!" said the older Priest, "are ye sure isn't it something about the wife and the world, it is, now?"

He asked this in a tone of sorrowful doubt; the shadows of the evening, which was drawing on, clothing his plain, kindly features with a softening shade. The room in which they were grew darker. Mr. De Brie answered:—

"I'm sure that it was no regret or desire for happiness,

or desire for old associations in the world:—that I am sure of;—but it *was* under God my wife's true love, and her strong woman's faith and the straightforward reasonings of her woman's conscience, that conquered me;—and a sense of my forsaken duty!" (He took a turn in the room and came back; the old priest sitting deeply agitated and breathing hard.) "It was the homely speech of a fisherman that first brought me face to face with the question: of this Skipper George, whose daughter has been stolen,—or lost. A child's tongue carried on the argument. *Pater, Domine cœli et terræ, abscondisti hæc a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelasti parvulis.*"

"Oh!" said Father Terence, hoarsely and brokenly, "don't be unpriested and cast out!—Don't, for the love of God!"

In a low voice to himself, he said:—

"Ah! if I'd taken heed to um that time when he wanted to speak to me about her being there!"

He sat as if ready to wheel round his chair away from his companion.

"Ay, Father Terence," said the latter, in a voice of great feeling; "you don't know what the loss of your love would be to me."

The old Priest turned away; but as he turned, said, in a low voice,—

"Ah! my son! how will I ever take that from ye, more than a father will forget his child,—whatever happens him?"

"I shall never forget you!—but why do I linger?—Father Terence, I shall give this up. Yes, I shall give this up! and then, if I must go through every terrible ordeal of scorn, and hatred, and loathing,—must be hunted by the fury of my brethren in the priesthood,—

must have my priestly character torn off me, bit by bit,—the tonsure razed,—my name put out in cursing,—I am ready. To me it comes in the way of duty to meet and bear the worst. The soldier is thrust through, and mangled, and trampled, still living, under horses' feet, and till his blood and breath be spent, still glories in the cause for which he suffers. I shall not court suffering or shame, but if they come, with God's help I can bear them!"

"They don't do that way with priests, now," said Father Terence, who sat with his back still turned, and spoke as if he scarcely thought of what he said. "The worst is publishing from the altar, in every church; but ye'll never come to that."

"Yes, it must come. You spoke of the old way; I shall go back to it,—from this day my place is empty!"

He kneeled down at the side of the old Priest, and bowed his head, and was, at first, silent for a while, then said,—

"If I have ever hurt your feelings, Father Terence, in any thing but this, I ask your pardon, humbly;" (the old man could not speak; his voice was choked)—"and now I go."

The younger priest rose slowly from his knees, then, grasping the other's hand, pressed it; and walking softly to the door, departed.

"Stay! Stay!" was called after him, but he did not turn.

He mounted his horse at the gate, and rode rapidly through the town up toward the river-head. An hour later he knocked at Mr. Wellon's door.

"Could you give so much time and trouble to me as to go down with me a little way?" he said, after a hurried salutation.

The Minister at once complied, asking no questions ; for he might have seen how occupied the other was. So the two walked together silently ; and people silently looked at them and looked after them.

It was not far to Mrs. Barrè's house ; and Father De Brie led the way straight to it. All was silent there ; and when he had knocked, and for a moment no one came, he turned to his companion anxiously and said, "She is not sick ?"

The English servant came to the door, and, seeing who was there, could scarcely speak or move.

They stood in the little parlor to which they were shown ; and though Father De Brie did not change his place, yet his eyes turned slowly from one of the pretty little articles of woman's taste to another, and quietly filled with tears. Presently a hurried and unequal step was heard from the chamber overhead, down the stairs, and Mrs. Barrè, in her black dress, pale and trembling, not lifting up her eyes, stood in the room. Young as she was, her dark hair had begun to have a gloss upon it (perhaps a glory) that did not come of years.

She had not felt the breath of that cold air,

The chill, chill wind from o'er the graves
And from the cold, damp tomb ;
The wind that frosts the hair it waves,
And pales the cheek's fresh bloom ;
That bitter wind that we must face
When down life's hill we go apace,
And evening spreads its gloom ;—

That had not breathed upon her.

"Mr. Wellon ! I call you to witness, before God," said Father De Brie, "that I pray the forgiveness of this blessed, blessed woman ; whom I may not call my wife, for I forsook her !"

Before the words were done, a sudden burst of life and love seemed to fill up the room; there was a little rush of gentleness, and Oh! a warm, trembling arm went round his neck; a tender forehead was bowed down upon his shoulder; a sweet, low murmuring was felt against his heart, and scarcely heard—

“You are my own, own husband!”

What was there in the world to them beside each other in that long moment? Their tears flowed down together; and then he drew back a little, and with two hurried hands smoothed away, more than once, to either side, the hair from that wife's forehead; then drew her to his bosom, that had not felt such dearness for so long, kissed her true lips, and said—

“If ever God gave treasure to a man unworthy, it was here! My wife! My wife!”

After another silence, he said, turning toward the Minister,—

“I may open my heart to God before you?”—and they kneeled down, and at first without speech, then in low, broken bursts, and then in a full stream of molten music he poured forth prayer for the forgiveness of the Prodigal, who had wandered in a far, strange country, and fed on husks; for blessing on that dear woman, and on all people;—and other voices,—of his wife, and Mr. Wellon even, whose nature was so strong and regular,—inarticulate, but expressing feeling irrepressible, from time to time rose and fell with his.

Little Mary, wondering, still and tearless, came and stole in between the two whose child she was; and in his prayer her father put his arm about her.

The words of that prayer could not be written down by hand; the spirit only could go along with them.

Perhaps they have been written somewhere. Then, calmly, when they stood up, he said :—

“ Now, Helen, shall I finish this unfinished work, for which you have so long been praying, before I join my life with yours again ? Shall I first go to the chief Minister,* and publicly recant my error and profess my faith ? There’s a schooner going from New-Harbor.”

“ You won’t go now, will you ? ” asked the Minister, who was no married man.

The wife who for so long had had no husband,—the woman whose strong love had been put away from its own proper, sacred object, to whom she *was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*,—her own loved, her own wedded, her own lost,—looked up at once and answered, “ Yes, if you will—I’ll wait.”

He held her close to his heart awhile, then parted from her tenderly, and went away with Mr. Wellon. Early next day they started together for New-Harbor.

* Newfoundland, in that day, was attached to the Diocese of Nova Scotia; the Bishop lived at Halifax.



CHAPTER LIII.

THE TRIAL.

COURT-DAY drew near, and public interest increased accordingly. The speculation of the public was abundant,—the more so for the mystery that clothed the government case. It was said that Mrs. Calloran had been discharged, for want of evidence to show any thing against her. The Roman Catholic public reported that she had been first tampered with to turn King's evidence; but had refused "to go nigh wan o' their courts to testify, as they call it, good or bad; no, not if they take the life of me itself." What there might be against the Priest, no man could say; but it was generally affirmed, by those of his own religion, that the government would break down at the trial.

The reader need not be reminded what excitement there must have been in Peterport, and generally among all Protestants. The Stipendiary, Mr. Naughton, (who knew something of the inner things of law,) assured the Minister, "They'll never be able to convict him, sir;" but most Protestants said, "they've murdered her, too; and they ought to be hung for it."

Ladford, meantime, (for so we call him still,) was not at home. He had sent a short note to Mr. Wellon from Castle-Bay, from which it appeared that it had been

made necessary for the poor man to hide again, but that he would be heard from when he was needed; and since that time no word had come from him. His pardon was all ready for him, but he did not come.

Up to the last day,—up to the last moment of the day before the one appointed, he was looked for, but he did not come; and there were no certain tidings from him. The nearest approach that could be made to him was this: In New-Harbor there had been a man called Lane, and there supposed to be a deserter from a man-of-war,—otherwise answering to the description of Ladford,—he had shipped, with others, in the schooner Ice-Blink, for a short trip along shore, and the schooner had not since been heard from; and great fears were felt for her. The Roman Catholics said that God's judgment had come down upon him; the Protestants began to mutter that he had had foul play. Meantime, so great was the excitement, and so strong was the public pressure, that it would not have been safe to have adjourned the trial. "It was thought best" (the Attorney-general told Mr. Wellon) "to call the case on, and if, at the last moment, the chief witness did not come, then the crown-counsel should throw it up, in open court. If the Priest were convicted on this charge, he would be safe for a trial for murder, *when that body should be found.*"

In the late evening came intelligence from a vessel just arrived in St. John's, that she had passed outside a brig having the Ice-Blink's crew on board.

The morning of the Fifteenth opened clear and bright; the day went clearly and brightly on; but such was the excitement and occupation of the town that few could have heeded the face of the fair sky.

The judges (Chief Justice and the two Assistants) had

been punctual to the day, and were all here. Whoever knows the trumpeters and javelin-men of the English Circuit, and the tremendous authority of the Bench, and long array of learned and practised members of the Bar, must change his notions to adapt them here. There was as good a chance of getting justice here, however, as any where in England.

A large storehouse,—furnished with two long deal tables, for the judges and lawyers, respectively; with mahogany chairs for the former; such as could be had for the latter; and, for the public, benches and boxes, as far as they could go,—served for the court-room;—and there was Father Nicholas Crampton, and Mrs. Bridget Calloran, also, in the custody of the officer to stand their trial.—Skipper George was not present; Father Terence sat there, grave and perplexed-looking; and not far from him sat Mr. Wellon, thoughtful and anxious, and looking often to the door.

Proclamation was made; commissions read; all formal ceremonies, (considerably abridged in number and amount from the “home”-standard,) tediously gone through with; lengthened, perhaps, purposely, in the doing; for the rest of the day nothing was done but filling up the panel of the jury; there was no challenge to the array or to the polls, by the accused or by Government; then the court adjourned to the next day.

Next morning news came at last to Mr. Wellon and to the Attorney-General, that the brig with the Ice-Blink’s men on board was signalled off the Narrows. Their hearts were lightened. A boat with a stout crew and an intelligent messenger was sent across the bay to bring Ladford, if he were there.

The Court sat; the Chief-Justice charged; the pris-

oners pleaded "not guilty" to the indictment; (Father Nicholas, who had no legal adviser, with apparent indifference; Mrs. Calloran,—under advice of her volunteer counsel,—with much resolution;) the Attorney-General opened the case for the Crown.

"It was not," he said, "without grave difficulties; and so serious was the crime charged, and so mighty the issue depending, not only to the parties whose characters and liberty and happiness were at stake, but to the community and to the sacred cause of justice, that he must confess freely his having approached it, not merely with anxiety and a deep sense of responsibility, but—he was not ashamed to say, as a Christian man, with humble prayer to God." He explained the nature of abduction; pointed out distinctions, and made clear the right and duty of the jury. He said that in briefly stating the main points of the case and in commenting, as he must, upon the characters of the accused, it must be understood that he sacredly confined himself to such statements as would be fully sustained by the evidence.

"Father Crampton, he was sorry to say,—he said it with deep regret,—he would speak far more freely had he the same evidence in regard to a clergyman of his own Church, for he should feel that he was not liable to suspicion, as well as that he was acting for and not against the true interest and welfare of his church and of religion,—Father Crampton, who now filled the place of a priest attached to the Bay-Harbor mission, assisting the popular and respected head of that mission," (the Attorney-General made a slight inclination towards Father Terence, who did not appear to notice the reference to himself,) "had the character of an able, intriguing, unscrupulous, and unyielding person in his plans and

policy ; and, moreover, had left behind him, in more than one place, which he had hastily quitted, an undesirable reputation, from the very reprehensible nature of his conduct and relations,—the Attorney-General must repeat that he was very sorry of it,—to persons of the other sex ; involving, as would be shown, in at least one case, a woman's moral character and good name ; in at least one other case, a lady's peace ; and the happiness of more than one family in those two cases alone, without reparation or atonement attempted or offered in either case."

The Court here interposed ; the Chief Justice saying that "he was sorry to interrupt the honorable and learned counsel for the Crown ; but, on behalf of the prisoner, who was silent, the Court must exercise its prerogative of 'counsel for the accused,' and object to this blackening of the character of the prisoner, by introducing matter which had no reference to his guilt or innocence of the charge on which he was now standing his trial."

Father Crampton begged to be allowed to say that "he made no objection to the honorable Attorney General's supporting a baseless charge by unsupported defamations of his character. He should meet the learned counsel later in the proceedings, and had no fear of the result."

The Attorney-General respectfully submitted that "he had proof for all that he asserted ; and that evidence of a bad moral character did affect the question of guilt under the indictment."

The Court insisted, that a man had been guilty of other offences elsewhere, is no argument that he has been guilty of this offence here.

The Attorney-General bowed, and abandoned the subject.

“The other prisoner was a woman uneducated, strongly prejudiced and determined, and of an enduring hate, as would appear from the evidence.”

During all this, Father Crampton, who was more watched than any other person present, was just himself: handsome, dignified, dark-looking. He did not assume the expression of a martyr, nor one of defiance or indifference: he sat composedly, sometimes looking, sometimes not looking, at others; but evidently awake to every thing. There were occasional heavings in the court-room; but no disturbance; only an emotion of the crowd. Mrs. Calloran sat, like one armed at all points and ready for an attack from any side. The Attorney-General continued:—

“The person with whose death”—(he hastened to correct himself, and substituted the term ‘carrying away,’ but the first phrase had created a marked sensation in the hearers—) “with whose carrying away the prisoners stood charged, was one Miss Lucy Barbury, eighteen years of age, daughter of a well-known and much respected Protestant planter of Peterport, and a mother, now Protestant, originally a Roman Catholic:—the girl herself was of such rare beauty of person and qualities of mind and heart, that she had—not so much risen above her native station in society as—brought together the different degrees of society most easily and beautifully in herself. With this most attractive young person, a young man, lately a candidate for the Romish priesthood, a foster-son, or rather nurse-child of one of the prisoners, pupil of the other, had fallen in love; and, either before or afterward, but as both the Priest and Mrs. Calloran believed and asserted, in consequence of the existence of this feeling, had abandoned his preparation for the priest-

hood. The father of the young man had taken it more kindly ; but the Priest and the nurse had felt bitterly at what the one called ‘the devil’s stealing the poor boy’s heart away from God to give it to that deceived creature’s (the mother’s half-sister’s) child ;’ and the other, ‘the ensnaring of one more soul, and one consecrated to the service of the altar, in the guilt and misery of apostasy.’

“ While these things were so, the object of their apprehension and dislike was taken sick, being delirious much of the time ; went out of her father’s house, on the fifteenth day of August, between the hours of six and eight of the clock, P. M. (probably in a fit of delirium) ; a person answering to her description was seen upon the way leading to Mr. Urston’s house ; near which, and at the landing close by, traces of her were found ; a punt had come and gone to and from that landing after dusk that evening, (Mrs. Calloran being the only one of the family at home ;) a female was seen, by an intelligent and observing witness, who would give his evidence by and by, to be carried down from that house, by other women, toward the landing ; that punt being overhauled by searchers, as it went from the landing, a person wrapped in female clothing, and supported by two other women, as if sick, was seen in it. Now, no sick person had at that time, or in that way, gone from Peterport, unless Lucy Barbury ; *every house* had been inquired at ; Father Crampton was recognized commanding the party, and urged the oarsmen to pull ; one of the four oarsmen told his wife that they had brought a young woman from Peterport ; and afterwards said ‘he was sorry for Mr. Barbury ; but he thought that if Father Nicholas’s hand were lifted, something would be found under it ;’ a young woman, said to be sick and out of her mind, was brought

to the nuns' building at Bay-Harbor at about eleven o'clock that night, as the chief of the nuns would testify ; was kept there secretly for four nights and four days ; taken care of by two nuns, who brought her there, and under Father Crampton's direction ; (the sister who would testify suspecting at the time that it was Lucy Barbury, but abstaining, by Father Crampton's expressed wish, from visiting her ;) a young person, whose complexion and features answered to Miss Barbury's, was seen by another witness lying, as sick, in a certain room of that building ; and a print, *bearing the name of St. Lucy*, was hanging opposite the bed ; the perfect and unmistakable outline of Miss Barbury's face, and the upper part of her person, was seen against the window of that room by another witness, perfectly familiar with her features and person ; in the night of the fourth day, as was reported in the nunnery, and as Father Crampton himself stated to the chief of the sisters, who would testify, the sick young woman disappeared ; she never came back, and Father Crampton said that she could not be found ; a conversation had been overheard, on the next day, between the two prisoners at Mr. Urston's in which the Priest spoke of Lucy Barbury as 'gone.'

" Since the disappearance, Mrs. Calloran had hesitated and equivocated, when questioned as to having seen the lost maiden on the fifteenth of August ; on the discovery, at her house, of a disfigured prayer-book which, as was afterward found, had belonged to the missing maiden, she had told several different stories about it, and had shown great anxiety to get it into her possession.

" Father Crampton, on his examination, had declined saying any thing about Miss Barbury's presence in the nunnery, or giving any account of the young woman who

had been there sick, and had been said to have disappeared, or to give any account of his own movements on the fifteenth of August. The two nuns who had brought the sick young person, and had charge of her, under his direction, had disappeared; the oarsmen,—three of whom • were brothers,—had disappeared; and the Government could not find them; thus, every person, who had gone with the punt to Peterport on that evening, had disappeared.

“These things being all put together,” the Attorney-General said: “Miss Barbury having been (after being missed from her father’s house,) in the Nunnery, and in the power of Father Crampton, and having afterwards disappeared entirely, without any explanation given; but, on the contrary, all means of throwing light on the dark catastrophe that may have closed so suddenly and sadly, her bright and happy life, being cunningly and thoroughly put out of reach; every person, in any way privy to, or informed of, the several steps by which that catastrophe was brought on, having been effectually secured from bearing witness, and Mr. Crampton, with every inducement which duty and interest, alike, could lay upon him, refusing to do any thing to clear up the dark places that made him suspected; it must be remembered that if the body had been discovered with any marks of violence or poison, the prisoners would have been standing a trial for their lives, on a charge of murder, with the very same amount of evidence that would now be brought to establish this lesser crime; and he, the Attorney-General, thought that the jury would be led by that evidence to believe the said Nicholas Crampton and Bridget Calloran to be guilty of the offence charged.”

Through all the Attorney-General’s speech, the atten-

tion of the three or four hundred people within the walls of the Court room was very closely held ; and, every now and then, a sympathetic heave or swell seemed to be communicated, (without any manifest connection,) from the much larger multitude without ; as the swell of the far-away sea pulses in one of those inland pools in the southern islands ;—but there was no disturbance. Within, apparently two thirds of the people were Protestants ; without, the greater part Roman Catholics. The orderly spirit was, perhaps, encouraged by the known and evident provision of soldiers and of special constables, that, to the number of seventy, had been sworn in from different parts of the Bay.

Mrs. Calloran looked frequently at Father Nicholas, being herself much excited ; he always sat quietly, only sometimes looking a little impatient, or smiling slightly, and almost sneering, at some parts of the argument of the counsel.

Father Crampton begged leave to say “ that he would not waste the time of the Court, or put the counsel for the Crown to trouble, to prove the fact of Miss Barbury’s being missing ; he admitted it ; he had no doubt of it. Nor would he require that it should be proven that she disappeared on the afternoon or evening of the fifteenth day of August at the time charged by the Government ; from that point he should deal with the witnesses as they were called on.”

When Mr. Urston and James were called, successively, to show that Father Crampton had expressed himself strongly disappointed and displeased, he not only made no use of the witnesses, after the Government had done with them, but admitted, freely, the substance of the expressions and the character of his own feelings, with a frank-

ness that very likely had a favorable influence upon the jury. It was understood that Mrs. Barrè was to be called to testify to some passages in the priest's former life ; and as her story was now pretty generally known, there was, doubtless, abundant anxiety in those present. This would explain the interest manifested by the spectators in such ladies as were there watching the progress of the trial ; but whatever were the method intended by the Attorney-General, she was not summoned, at least in the earlier stages of the proceeding ; nor was a certain Englishman, accidentally arrived a few weeks before, who, it was said, had recognized Father Crampton as one who had villainously ruined a near kinswoman of his own.

So the witnesses succeeded each other in procession quiet and orderly, with slight interruption. In declining to ask Jesse Barbury any questions, the Priest said that he had no wish nor interest to contradict or meddle with his testimony ; at which a flush of bashful pride went over Jesse's honest face, (and, no doubt, over Isaac Maffen's) ; and the witness ventured a glance, of his own accord, at the Attorney-General, as if Jesse felt that time and skill had been well bestowed in drawing out evidence, which, when drawn out, stood thus unimpeachable.

The Attorney-General did not hurry himself or his witnesses ; but Father Crampton let them go unquestioned, and so did Mrs. Calloran's counsel, as if they acted in concert. The first change of proceeding was with Mr. Bangs. In his direct examination, whose redundancy the learned prosecutor was at no pains to check, he gave an account of his seeing the woman carried down from Mr. Urston's by two others. Mr. Wellon described the finding of the cap, and identified the one produced. Mrs. Barbury swore that it was her daughter's. Gilpin

gave his account of the prayer-book, and of Mrs. Calloran's and Father Crampton's suspicious conduct in regard to it. Then Captain Nolesworth's deposition was put in, without question from the accused. Then Mr. Bangs was recalled, and described his visit to the Nunnery;—how “he went in, 'th the holy priest, there, an' saw all about it, an' where they took their meals,” and so forth;—with which, in spite of the solemnity of the occasion, both the court and others seemed to be amused. After the Government had done with him, Father Crampton, premising that he was no lawyer, and begging that the answers might be as short and plain as possible, asked him whether he had been *invited* to go in. “I undertook to go in, o' myself, first, I guess,” said Mr. Bangs, “an' then you come along, an' finally, you concluded to take me in, I b'lieve.” “Did I invite you to the room where the sick person was?” “Wall, I guess ye did, sir.” “Did I make any difference between that and the rest?” “I dono's ye did.” “Do you know that I did not?” “I guess ye didn't.” “Did I show any apprehension, in showing you that room?” “I guess ye didn't.” “Did I hurry you away from it?” “No, sir; I can't say's ye did; only when the holy virgins, there, or what not, snickered out at my hat, I s'pose ye was ruther put out.” “But did I show any anxiety? or did I hurry you away?” “No, sir.” “That will do, sir,” said Father Nicholas, “it is to be observed that that was the room in which the girl lay whom I am charged with having kidnapped.”

Ladford did not come; the Attorney-General appeared anxious. He said that an important witness for Government had not arrived, though constantly expected; it was very embarrassing, as that witness could testify to the

actual presence of Miss Barbury in the Nunnery, and in that room in which the sick young woman was seen ; but he would go on, expecting to supply the deficiency very soon.

Gilpin was recalled, and gave his evidence about the conversation overheard. In the cross-examination, Father Nicholas asked him : " Did you not say that I distinctly spoke of Lucy Barbury as ' gone ? ' " " I heard her name ; and I heard you speak of *some one* as ' gone . ' " " Can you swear that I said that she was gone in any way except as having disappeared ? Think well of it . " " No, sir . " " Well : did you hear me speak of any one else, in that conversation ? " " I think I did : you both spoke about somebody that had been confessing to Father De-bree . " " Man or woman ? " " Woman . " " Did you understand that to be Miss Barbury ? " " No, sir ; I understood it was Mrs. Barrè . " " And can you swear that that was not the person I said was gone ? " " No, sir, I cannot . " " That will do, sir . "

Sister Theresa was next called to the stand ; but before her examination had begun, a disturbance outside and at the door of the Court-room drew all attention to that side. The name of " Lane " was heard ; the Attorney-General became agitated, but looked suddenly hopeful. The officers of the Court had gathered immediately toward the door. Father Nicholas cast a quick glance that way ; and Mr. Wellon looked, very eagerly.

" There's no Ladford there," said the latter, forgetting himself, and thinking aloud. Then, presently recalled by the many faces turned to him, he bowed to the Court by way of apology. The Attorney-General, who had looked to him, like the rest, still waited, without questioning the nun who had been called on, and requested her to be seated.

"We hope," said he to the Court, "to be able to put our witness on the stand in a few moments, if the Court will be pleased to indulge us ; I see the messenger who was sent for him."

The officers quieted all but the indefinite motion and sound that show the excited state of a crowd, and made way for one of several men who had got within the door. The counsel for the Crown were, for a while, in close conversation with him ; a new sensation passed over the crowd ; and then the Government said that "information had been just received which satisfied them that Warrener Lane, the witness for whom they had been looking, had perished, while engaged in an honorable mission of charity, respected by his comrades, and in the faith and penitence of a Christian man. It was, therefore, out of their power to put his testimony into the case, and they must do without it."

A new sensation passed over the crowd ; and something like a shout was heard on the outside of the building. Father Crampton almost smiled, and lifted up his eyes, apparently in a momentary thanksgiving.

The Government did not throw up the case. The Attorney-General simply and gravely expressed his regret at the loss of so important evidence, and at the death of the man, though it was in an honorable cause. The other witnesses were called, after Sister Theresa ; and the evidence of the officers who had searched for the missing nuns and boatmen, showed that not one of these could be traced. Father Crampton asked no questions ; leaving it, as he said, to the Court to show the jury that this testimony did not, in any way, touch him.

All evidence touching the priest's character, save in

the one point of his being likely to have committed this crime, was ruled out.

The Chief Justice summed up and commented upon the testimony wisely and fairly ; when he had done, Father Crampton bowed dignifiedly to the court.

When the case was given to the jury, a leading barrister leaned over and whispered to the solicitor-general, "They won't leave their seats."

The jury withdrew, however, and were out about twenty minutes, when they came in with a verdict of "Not guilty."

The priest rose, and bowing gravely, as before, withdrew. Mrs. Calloran shook her petticoats, and turning indignantly to the Bench, said :—

"Sure, didn't I know that before, without three jidges an' twelve juries to tell it me ? An' who'll get satisfaction for me lying in prison ?"

An officer laid hold of her, and hurried her away, to the freedom of the open air, lest she should be committed for contempt.

From the street came a sound significant of popular excitement.

It was impossible for Father Nicholas, if he had wished it, to get rid of all the different demonstrations in which the excited spirit of his fellow-religionists broke forth after his discharge from custody. He had no carriage to be dragged ; nor what would have become the habits of the country better, boat to be towed ; but as he walked along the street, the men walked in ranks of four or five abreast, before and behind, and in the roadway at his side ; and women, less orderly, were mingled among them. Green badges of fir, and spruce twigs, and here and there of shamrock, indicative of birth in the Emerald

Isle, soon made their appearance, marshals of the procession decorated and distinguished by suspenders outside of their clothes, presently were conspicuous ; and so, with heavy, martial tramp, and fierce looks, (a few of them giving groans before one or two houses of obnoxious persons,) the crowd escorted Father Nicholas Crampton up to the Mission premises, while the marshals got into everybody's way, and made themselves very hot, ordering and gesticulating.

One woman was very active and prominent in the demonstration about the priest. Upon her they presently laid hands, and placed her in the midst, and escorted her also. This was Mrs. Calloran, who had at first been forgotten. When she had thus found her proper place, she trudged on, less noisy though not less earnest than before.

No let or hinderance was offered to this crowd ; the soldiers were kept out of sight ; the special constables were not put forward, and the rest of the people did not come in the way. At the gate Father Nicholas dismissed them with a few words.

"They had had provocation," he said, "that would have driven a less patient and orderly people to violence. They had, also, the power to sweep the arrogant contemners of their most holy religion into nothing. He was a minister of peace, and though he knew that in the sight of men they would be excused, and, in the sight of God, they would be justified, if they were to show a sense of their wrongs, yet he must counsel them to wait patiently for the day in which they would at length have full justice."

Then the marshals and others, with much brandishing of their arms, got the multitude to their knees, much as if they had mowed them down ; and while some wiped their faces, and some brushed their clothes, and some continued

certain altercations with their neighbors, as the way of crowds is, Father Crampton blessed them.

They had begun slowly to break up into small companies, not knowing exactly what to do with themselves, when Father Terence came, making his way home, through the midst of them. Very many of the late enthusiasts, on becoming aware of his presence, looked rather sheepish.

He addressed himself to different little gatherings, as he passed by, exhorting them to "go home, now, and show the way Irishmen could be quiet." There were some who objected that "it was not just the thing to be quite, till they'd got the life tramped out o' them;" but Father Terence, by asking who was tramping the life out of them, and bidding them not to "be talking nonsense, that way," convinced by far the greater number, and sent them to their homes. The remainder soon disappeared, and the town was quiet.



CHAPTER LIV.

THE LAST OF LADFORD.

WHILE the counsel lingered talking in the courtroom, after the withdrawal of the judges, the Attorney-General, leaving his papers and other matters in the hands of his clerk, proposed to Mr. Wellon a walk; an invitation which the Minister readily accepted.

In passing out, the lawyer beckoned to Lane's shipmate, who had come from St. John's with the messenger; and, as they went, they listened to the story of the last of Ladford; which, in such shape as that it shall be best understood, (though not in the man's words,) we give the reader.

Where Trinity and Placentia Bays cut nearly through the Island, the distance across the tongue of land, in the narrowest part, is only three or four miles, while the nearest way by water is some three hundred; yet, so hard is the crossing, and so much more used are our Newfoundlanders to going afloat than afoot, that all traffic and travel in that day, took the sea-passage,—perhaps, still do so.

There is a town, Placentia, once—in its French days—far more important than now; and, even in the time of our story, having a good deal of stir of business. Several schooners lay in the harbor, and one—the Ice-Blink—was

being pretty briskly fitted out for sea ; a dozen men or so being engaged in caulking, and painting, taughtening rigging, and scraping down and slushing masts. The schooner's destination was to St. John's, but she was temporarily to go up the coast toward Cape Ray, to relieve the people of a Quebec emigrant-ship, wrecked somewhere near La Poile.

During this time, a man made his appearance in Placentia, giving his name as Lane, and supposed by the people there to be a deserter from the man-of-war on the station, — the Surinam. His ways were strange ; he “studied,” as they said, a good deal ; read his little Bible and Prayer-book much ; was quiet, and had such “old-fashioned ways” as to raise a laugh now and then at first ; but, at length, was found to know so much, and to be so handy, that, in three days' time, he was not only a valued hand at the schooner, but was in that sort of esteem that he was put at the sculling-oar when he went with others up the Bay, or outside. This was our man, Ladford.

On the whole, though some thought “'e wasn' gezac'ly right, mubbe,” yet a general deference towards him began to establish itself. If he was “sowem'y strange,” in the eyes of the crew with whom he was just brought together, yet they saw, at once, that he was a “proper knowledgeable man,” and they accordingly thought his strangeness to arise from the possession of special spiritual gifts, connected with his abstraction and study of the Word of God. It was asserted, indeed, that a very ugly look had been seen in his face ; but, as his uniform expression was very sad, and his manner was uniformly gentle, this assertion was swallowed up and lost sight of, in the general impression of his character ; one which was diffused everywhere by those public carriers, the children, and prevailed to

some extent, also, among the Roman Catholics, who are the great part of the population of Placentia.

The wind does not always blow from the same quarter, and it changed, after a couple of days, for the waiters in Great Placentia Harbor, and came in from something south of east. The moment that it was settled that the breeze would hold, the "Ice-Blink" got herself ready to start, with sails filling and flapping, and streamer, and pennon, and house-flag, and union-jack, all flaunting gayly in the wind. Shortly before casting off from the stage, another circumstance gave occasion to remark, and added to the mystery of Ladford's character. He had somehow set his mind on taking along with them, in the schooner, a very large punt that he had used a good deal in the Bay; and, at this last moment, he seemed so earnest for it, that it was determined to take the boat, although, as had been objected to him, it lumbered up the deck greatly. So it was got on board to his satisfaction.

A musket was fired from the schooner, and the "Ice-Blink" gallantly left the stage. It was a pleasant afternoon, and all things seemed to conspire to help them forward,—weather, and wind, and tide,—and these Placentia men know the way, and the headlands, and islands, and harbors along the way, as a Londoner knows the Strand, and Temple-Bar, and St. Paul's Cathedral; or an Edinburgh man, Prince's Street, and the North Loch, and the Castle. It is a dangerous coast to strangers. The rocks near Cape Race have caught many a ship, and St. Shott's has had its share of the fearful spoil, and more than one other place between that and Cape Ray. The very natives and familiars of this shore may be carried out of their reckoning by unexpected currents, which, sometimes, seeming to be set going by the winds, defy calculation of

their direction or force ; but then, if the weather should become stormy, there is Fortune Bay, just on the other side of Cape Chapeau Rouge, with some good shelters in it, and, on the other hand, St. Peter's in Miquelon, to make for.

The wind falls light and the weather continues clear and warm, as they go down the Bay and over toward the Cape ; and the long evening, until late into the night, is spent, as sailing men are wont to spend a good deal of their time, and these men especially, looking for a short trip only, were tempted to spend much of theirs, in talking. What Ladford did and said, we beg the reader to observe.

The watch below staid on deck ; and except the man at the helm and a look-out forward, all hands were gathered together, amidships, between the great punt and the weather bulwarks. They had had several songs—some of them of the singers' own making—and these last had a melancholy burden of shipwreck or loss of shipmates, and then the conversation took a gloomy character ; and at length turned to the supernatural, as is so common with our fishermen and with other superstitious people.

From dwelling for a good while together on the mysterious noises and happenings in a certain cove in Hermitage Bay, which was supposed to be haunted, and about which most of them had strange stories to tell, (often exaggerations or wonderful alterations of some one common stock,) they passed to speaking of the sight of mountains under water, which in some parts of the island are seen, fathom after fathom, hundreds of fathoms down below the surface. To one unaccustomed to the sight of these in the clear water, they have a most startling and dreadful look. Though the highest point be, perhaps,

four fathoms deep, yet the eye that can follow down the rugged sides of these vast mountains, into their far rifts and clefts, is stretched wide with terror, as, with the long swell of the sea, the perfectly transparent element lets you slowly settle towards these awful depths.

Ladford sate still ; awake or asleep he took no part in the conversation, but at length, while they still spoke of these fearful sunken or never-trodden peaks, the silent stranger first broke silence. In common language, though above that of his companions, and sitting as unmoved as he had before been sitting, he touched upon the different subjects of their former talk, and told them of things which he had done and seen, or which had happened at his very side ; but, he said, there was one thing that a man found out, if he only went in the way of it, and that was, that one needn't be under fear of any thing if he only had *something to hold on to* ; and as the man went on, in his quiet way, sometimes reasoning, sometimes describing his experience, sometimes expressing strong conviction, the silence was kept about his single voice, not even broken by words of assent.

The voice seemed to come down from some heights of spiritual wisdom, clear and fresh, and when he spoke of hidden things and mysteries, and took their mountain-depths buried in clear water for his illustration, using, sometimes, the language of Holy Scripture, he fairly opened to his hearers a new world, and there were few, if any, of those about him that did not listen attentively ; though, of course, some heard him in such a way as to be ready to make a little fun out of his wisdom, by-and-by.

As his voice ceased, it was as if an attraction had ceased to be exerted ; the crew shifted their postures and filled their pipes ; and when they found the silence to last,

got up and looked about them. In a moment the speaker's place was empty ; and one of his shipmates, going below, heard a slow, regular breathing of a sleeper ; and presently, drawing gently near, and feeling, found that it was Ladford sleeping. It was not long before a strange voice made its way into the darkness in which the sleeping and the waking man were, (for the latter had thrown himself down to rest,) a voice like none the fisherman knew, and he started up and fled, in great alarm, to the deck once more. Coming, as it did, directly after their discussion, there is little cause to wonder at his being put in terror by it. Several of the men, however, immediately went down, and the skipper, taking a light with them ; and having ascertained that no one was there, in the body, except the single man asleep, awaited, eagerly, a repetition of the wonder ; the light being, first, carefully shaded.

Presently a strange sound came again—not like the voice of man or woman—and it spoke English words. Then, using their lamp once more, they found that though Ladford's eyes were fast in slumber, yet his lips were moving and the words were his. They were uncommonly soft, and with a peculiar distinctness of their own, much as if some finer organ than that with which he framed his waking speech, gave utterance to them, or as if some finer being, having found this body sleeping, had taken possession of it for a while. Broken sentences, not understood, came first from him, while they were listening, and by-and-by he said :—

“Take those letters and make his name. The letters are there ;” and he said it so distinctly that the men began to search for them, about the place, but in vain.

“’E’s dreamun,” said they, “mubbe it’s about some child ’e’ve ahad and loss’d un.”

So they stood still and listened for more : " I s'pose it's no harm, we listenin' ? " said one of them. The sleeper soon spoke again :—

" Put them all round.—L—O—R—D."

The men looked at each other wondering, and leaned forward, casting glances at the sides of the rude place and the walls, and giving a gleam from the light, which showed nothing but bunk or bulkhead there, with little articles of apparel here and there hanging.

" It's the cap'n o' the man-o'-war, mubbe," suggested one of the men, recurring to the general conjecture about their shipmate's history.

" J's first, you know," went on the sleeping man ;
" E—S—U—S."

" That's pretty, now ; isn't it ? " said one of the witnesses of the scene, when, after a moment, they had all come to the knowledge of his meaning ; and every man of them uncovered his head.

" Do 'ee think 'e *is* all alone ? " was suggested.

The lantern was cautiously held to his face, and, as they bent over and gazed upon him, they could not but see the lovely look that lay in his features ; but there was none with him that they could see. His clothes were what the reader may remember as his better dress, and they were coarse enough ; yet, where his sou'wester had fallen aside, it looked almost as if scales were cleaving off from about the brightness of the face. They lingered a little, and then left him there, at rest.

The morrow came calmly over sea and land, with the wind blowing gently from the same quarter as on the day before. By the time that they could well make out the land, they found themselves abreast of Cape Chapreau Rouge, and seven or eight miles to windward of it. No one

roused the Old Sailor, (as they generally called Ladford,) when his watch was called; he had worked hard the day before, and, moreover, the deference already yielded to him was increased by the story of the night scene, which was now generally known on board.

He came up, looking pale and thoughtful, but taking no notice of the curious glances that his comrades cast at him. The wind freshened a little, veering rather more to the southward as they had expected. Ladford, who had kept himself apart, was standing on the leeward side of the deck, looking over the water, abstractedly, when, suddenly, his eyes were drawn toward the bow, and fixed in that direction. He shaded them with his hand, and then his lips moved without sound. Presently he looked at the large boat which he had induced them to bring, and then back again toward the bow.

"What punt is that?" he asked, in a low, even voice, keeping his eyes still fixed.

There were plenty to hear him,—for he was constantly observed,—and some one answered, catching, unwittingly, the same tone,—

"There's ne'er a punt where you're looking, at all."

"What punt is *that*?" repeated he; "there! by the bow!"

The answer to this repeated question was to the same effect; but given in a faint voice, and rather aside to the rest than addressed to the asker.

"Do ye see?" asked the latter again, where they saw nothing. "Do ye see her? —See who go there!" (he now raised his right hand, slowly, and pointed.) "Who are they going over the bow?" His eye kept steadily fixed, unwinking and unwavering, rather wider than is natural, and he next drew up to the bulwark, and looked over, and began, gravely, to count.

"One, two, three, four," he told, up to "fourteen;" then an anxious expression came upon his face, and, almost immediately, he repeated his count, in the same way, and to the same end; and then put his hand to his brow, and passed it over his face as he withdrew it. He then gave one slow, fixed look towards the spot in which he had seen the punt and the men, and then turned slowly away, and took his place with some sail-makers, who made room for him very readily.

The men who had witnessed this singular scene did not meddle with him, nor even talk about it aloud; they spoke of it, in a low voice, by themselves, and some of them went forward to see if there was any thing thereabouts that he could have mistaken for what he thought himself to have seen. Others were satisfied, without going forward, that the old seaman had had a "visage;" and they speculated upon it, from time to time, during the day, as portending something.

"'E've got the number of all hands, only one short," said some one. "There's fifteen of we, all told."

In Ladford's immediate neighborhood, there was little talking; yet any question, (generally repeated once or oftener,) he answered in a few pleasant words, perfectly rightly. He took a double turn at the helm, where old habit made him do the utmost justice to the schooner's sailing.

Day wore away, and night came on. This second night they were less talkative than on the former one; a light breeze bore them on; there was no working of the vessel, and the men were mostly gathered about the capstan. Ladford was below, and had turned in; there was nothing noticeable about him this night, and all was quiet, except for snatches of talk among the men on deck.

"'Twas in British Channel we were run down that time," said one of these. "'Took us just about amidships; but, for all that, she was a long time gown down; had time to get aboard o' the ship, and we were a mile off by the time. She was a tough old thing, that brig."

"I should have thought she'd 'a' broke you all to pieces," said another.

"Why, no! it wa'n't a very hard knock she gave us, seeminly,—the knock was n'. In course she put her long nose in over us, and got foul with our standun riggin' a' both sides; we had to cut away. There! twasn' much harder than that, now."

"What?" asked several voices.

"Just that little thump, whatever it was," said the teller of the story.

Scarcely any one had noticed the little shock to which he called their attention; and so the general opinion was that he had forgotten.

While they were expressing this opinion, the man at the helm cried out; and all at the same instant, and by a common impulse, started up and cried:—

"She's going down! she's sinking! God have mercy upon us! We're lost men!" and the other cries of sudden terror and dismay.

The skipper was as sudden and stern as lightning, but perfectly self-possessed, as were the greater part of these hardy men, who had seen worse things than this. There was not a minute. There was a rush, as of a mill-stream, and an unsteady settling of the ship rather over to port, (that is away from the wind,) and down by the head,—but all in an instant.

"The big punt!" was the cry; and over the deck of that foundering schooner, like men that tread the crack-

ling, bending floor of a burning house, they rush. The large punt is got out, *over the bow*,—over the *lee-bow*,—and just as they are, without stop or stay, without saving any thing, or trying to save any thing, every man goes over into her, and they shove off, clear.

“Is there any one behind?” asks the skipper. “Don’t give way yet!—Hilloa, there, aboard! Who’s aboard, there?” thundered the skipper.

“Not a living soul!” was the general answer; and they could see the whole deck empty. In one breath, almost, all life had passed out of the great schooner into the boat.

“Hold on a bit!” said the skipper, standing aft, with the sculling oar in hand. The water was up to the bends; presently it was up to the chains; they couldn’t tell how high it was.

“Give way, boys! Give way, all! For your life, now!” said the skipper.

The punt shot away, leaving the schooner rocking, for the last time, upon the surface of the deep. All eyes were fixed in silence upon her, in the dimness of the night, about three hundred yards off. There was something solemn or awful in the sight of the deserted vessel, tall and ghastly, going through the last, alone. It was like a living tragedy. She rocked a little to and fro—but very little. The men, in their own misfortune, felt sad for her.

“It’s cruel!” said the skipper. “It’s hard to see her go that way! but isn’t she a lady!”

He was proud of her, and of the way in which she was going to her end, while his heart was full of her loss; but there was a change, soon enough.

“What’s that?” “Sure enough!” “Count! for God’s sake!” shouted different voices. “Three,—and

five ;—and two are seven,—ten,—thirteen,—fourteen ! Good God ! there's some one aboard ! We're one short ! Let's have a try for him ! ”

But at the instant, with a sort of wail from under her deck, down went the Ice-Blink, sails and all, fathom by fathom,—the waters coming together with a great swash,—and the Deep had swallowed her up ! She was gone !

—“ But we're all here,” said one of the saved men, when they began to breathe again. “ Who's missun ? ”

No, no. There were but fourteen of them. “ And where's the Old Sailor ? ” asked the skipper. Sure enough, he was missing !

“ And this is 'e's *punt* ; and was n' there *fourteen went over the bow* ? an' was n' that a visage ? ”

“ Come, come, boys ! Let's pull there again, and we may pick up *somethun*,” said the skipper. He did not say “ somebody,” but “ something.”

They searched all about the place ; but nothing was to be found ; nor could they even make out what had sunk their schooner. If it had been spring, the ice might have done it ; as it was, they had not been run down,—they had not struck a rock.—It might have been a floating wreck, perhaps, that had cut through her ; but they could not tell.

And the Old Sailor was gone with her ! If it was for the interest of Father Nicholas that he should not appear at the Court in Harbor Grace,—if it was for the interest of justice that he should,—it is settled already. Alone, in that great schooner for his coffin, with the tall masts over him, and sail set, under the deep water, sleeps the body of William Ladford, or Warrener Lane, once smuggler and sinner, to await the General Rising.

His shipwrecked mates pulled, heavy-hearted, for the

land. One man (but it must be remembered that it was night,) said that he could see the Old Sailor with his hand over his eyes, as in the morning of that day ; and it was also asserted (and it may be so) that the fatal word "Fourteen" came over the water to the punt.

A gale headed the boat off ; and after narrowly escaping swamping, (it was *the great punt*, under God, that saved them,) the crew got on board a lumber-ship, out of the St. Lawrence, and having been carried half-way across the ocean, happening to meet a Newfoundland vessel, were transferred to her.

This was the last of Ladford's story. It was soon spread among his former neighbors, and divided the interest of the trial. It is a common fate for fishermen to be drowned ; but the man's death was singular and strange, as much of his life had been. There were abundant witnesses of all the facts, and often is the tale told in Placentia, and very often among the people of Peterport.

Shortly after the Minister's return from his walk with the Attorney-General, Jesse Hill presented himself in the parlor at the Bay-Harbor parsonage, and drawing down his red forelock, by way of salutation to Mr. Wellon, said :—

"Sarvunt, sir ! I made so bold"—(here he stole a glance toward the entry, and Isaac came to his support,)—"Pareson, ef ee'd be so well-plased, sir," he went on, leaving his exordium, and rushing to his subject, "we wants to git Willium Ladford's pardon, sir." Mr. Wellon looked at him in surprise.

"He's pardoned in Paradise, long before this, I hope, Jesse," said he.

"I know, sir ; but I means the pardon from the Governor, sir ; that's *the paper*. You know we can't bury

un, Pareson Wellon ; and 'ee know people says there's stones with writings on 'em put up in churches in England ; an' so a good many of us thought we'd ax for 'e's pardon, an' put un in a frame an' hang un up in the school-house for a sort of a grave-stone, like."

The Parson's surprise had changed into a different feeling, before Jesse had done speaking ; and he assured him that he would do his best to get what they wanted, and they might hang it up in the church, if they liked.

We may anticipate sufficiently the time to say that the Document, engrossed and bearing its seal, was afterward secured and presented to Jesse for the rest. Jesse Hill asked the Minister to be "so well-placed to read it," and having secured its being made plain that the Warrener Lane in the writing was the man usually known as "William Ladford," Jesse insisted, in the name of his neighbors, on paying the charges, "for they things cost money," and having been satisfied in this respect also, took the paper thankfully away.

It is now a tablet to the memory of poor Lane, or Ladford, in the church at Peterport.



CHAPTER LV.

STRANGE HAPPENINGS IN THE "SPRING-BIRD."

IT was on Thursday that the Court adjourned, leaving not only the accused acquitted of the crime with which they had been charged, but the fate of Skipper George's daughter as dark as ever. The verdict was the only one that could have been brought in upon the evidence; and the Attorney-General said that he could not wonder at the result. "He had proof enough," he said, "that Crampton had been a villain to others; but he could not prove that he had made way with Lucy Barbury, whatever he might think about it."

The Chief-Justice left Bay-Harbor for the Capital, in a private boat, on Thursday afternoon. Judge Bearn and his other associate waited for the "packet" of the next day. Mr. Wellon, having passed the night with his brother clergyman at Bay-Harbor, went homewards next morning.

Half-way upon the road the Minister encountered the carrier, who had two letters for him, which had come from the other end of the Bay, and which the man said he had brought on to Bay-Harbor, where he heard that Mr. Wellon was, because he thought they had something to do with Skipper George's daughter; for he had sent in one from the River-head to her father, as he came along.

The Parson hastened to break the seal of one of them, and, after reading a little way, with a look of interest and wonder, as he sat upon his horse, turned to the signature; then opened the other, and looking first to the name of the writer, read it eagerly, with occasional words of astonishment, riding, at the same time, back towards Bay-Harbor, with the letter-carrier at his side.

The substance of the two letters (which were from Captain Nolesworth and his second mate) we put into a narrative form, for it belongs to our story, and is an account of certain strange things which happened in the brig of which Captain Nolesworth and Mr. Keefe were Master and second officer.

The "Spring-Bird" sailed, it will be remembered, on the night of the nineteenth of August, the same in which, as had been suspected, Lucy Barbury was murdered in Bay-Harbor.

At about eleven o'clock that night,—a fine wind having sprung up,—officers and men were all on board, and with the merry breeze she went down Conception Bay, along by Bacaloue Island, and so out toward sea.

Thereabouts the wind falls baffling, and soon heads round and round, until it comes in from the ocean. She tacks over to Cape St. Francis, and clears Newfoundland. There is a thick fog outside; but between it and the land is a street of clear water, with the tall cliffs on one hand, and that unsubstantial wall upon the other; and across this open water she lies, until she buries herself so completely that one end of the brig can scarcely be seen from the other. So she works her way by long stretches, out into the great waste of waters across which she is bound. All sail is set that will draw:—topsails, topgallant-sails, and royals, fore and aft,—those square sails that, in day-

light or moonlight, sit so jauntily upon these wanderers of the sea. Away aloft, they look as if they were taken out of the strongest of the mist, and cut to shape and tied down to the yards. The high, full moon can do little with this fog; and by way of warning to any ship that may be near, a sort of thunder is beaten out of the hollow of a cask, and a sharp look-out kept. "Eight bells," for four o'clock! The second mate's watch is turned up; the man at the wheel gives up the helm to a new hand, telling him how to steer, when the Captain, who stood smoking forward of the companion-way, or opening to the cabin stairs, feels his arm squeezed in such a way as makes him start and turn round suddenly. He asks, at the same time,—

"Who are you? What do you want?"

"Captain," answered a voice, which he recognized as that of the late helmsman, though his face was so strange that, in the dimness, he did not at first know it, "there's something round there to leeward."

"Why, man alive! what are you talking about? and what makes you look so?" said the Captain, turning round to leeward, and straining his eyes over the quarter-rail, to make out the strange sight; "Tom, look out on the lee quarter; do you see any thing?"

"It's aboard of us, Cap'n," said the man who had brought the alarm.

"Why, you're standing up and dreaming with your two eyes open; don't you think we should have felt it by this time?"

At this instant a cry came from among the men forward, which made the Captain leap from his place to go toward them. A strange sort of cry it was, of several voices in one; but all suppressed by fear.

"What ails ye, there?" he called out. "What is 't? speak out?"

As he came abreast of the cook's galley, the second mate came right in front of him, holding up his two arms, without saying a word.

"Why, what's the matter? For mercy's sake, Mr. Keefe, are *you* mad?" the Captain shouted to him.

"'Bide a minute, Cap'n Nolesworth," said the mate, breathing hard, and bending over himself to recover breath and strength. "'Bide a minute, sir! The brig's all right, sir," he said, keeping his seaman's presence of mind; "but there's more aboard than ever shipped in her! I'll show you," said he; and, holding by the weather bulwarks, he went forward.

A few steps brought him to a stand; and saying, in a husky voice, "There, sir!" he pointed with his left hand.

The Captain followed the direction of his hand, and, looking steadily a while, made out a figure, white and ghastly, standing near the lee bulwarks where the pale, misty shimmer of the moon fell on it, under the foresail. It seemed, to a long, searching sight, a female figure; and it almost seemed as if two eyes were gazing, with a dull glare, out of the face. At this dim hour, in misty moonlight, amid the fright of men, perhaps Captain Nolesworth would have found it hard to keep out of his mind that overmastering fear that, in the minds of most of us, lies rather hidden than dead, and starts up some time, suddenly, when we feel as if we were breaking through into the land of spirits, or its inhabitants were forcing or feeling their way to us. The first words spoken were of a kind to turn the scale, if it were balanced, down to the side of awe and dread.

"I sid un come in over the side," said the man who

had first spoken to the Captain, of the strange thing, and who had now followed the two officers of the vessel to the spot where they had taken stand. "'Xac'ly as the watch changed, it comed."

The man who said this slunk, like a living mass of fright, behind the second mate.

"What are you talking, man?" said the Captain, in a low voice, and keeping his place.

As the mist changed and fled momentarily, so the figure changed; growing now dimmer and now more distinct, much like the thicker substance of a nebula, while many eyes were gazing, at their widest, on it.

The Captain had not lost himself, old sailor as he was; for he called out, peremptorily, to the man now at the helm, "What are you doing with the brig, there, you? Keep her a good full! Can't you see you've got her all shaking? Put your helm up, sir, and if you want me to take you away from the wheel, let me know it."

Even the Captain's voice, speaking so much to the purpose, had a strange, thin sound; it was not like itself. It took effect, indeed, upon the helmsman, who managed to get the vessel on her course again, although with a good deal of unsteadiness of steering, after that; but it had not the effect of clearing the air of its unearthly influences, or reassuring those who had been struck with terror by the phantom.

"We must see into this thing," the Captain said; "I must be master of my own ship."

The watch on deck,—the whole crew, perhaps,—are clustered in the close neighborhood of the captain and second mate, except the helmsman; who, in answer to another caution of the master, says that he is doing his best; but that the brig will not steer, while **THAT** is

there; and there, in the mist, as a white shell in deep water, gleams the slight apparition.

In the same instant with all this, the misty shape itself moved from its place;—its misty robes floating, and the mist around it waving, horribly.

A sort of shudder seized the men, and they crowded together, still more closely.

“Mr. Keefe, will you go aft and take the helm?” said the Captain.

“Ay, ay, sir,” said the second mate, aloud; and then drawing close to Captain Nolesworth, he said privately, “As sure as I live, sir, that’s Lucy Barbury’s ghost!” and he hurried to relieve the frightened man at the wheel.

The master glanced hastily up at the sails, and out upon the sea. “Go forward, men!” said he to the crew. The unsubstantial shape had swayed itself, instantly, back, and seemed leaning against the bulwark, and still gazing through the mist.

“She’ll bring a gale!” said one of the trembling crew, from where they had clustered, by the forward hatch.

“Keep still there, with your foolishness! John Ayers! you and Thompson lay out, with all hands, on the weather yard-arms, and rig out our studding-sail-booms, alow and aloft! Cheerily, now! Away with ye!” said the Captain; but even the Captain’s voice sounded foggy; and the men climbed lubberly.

Again the figure moved as if to come forward, or seemed to move. Intense fear seemed to strike the men motionless, each man where he was.

“Look out, Cap’n!—behind you!” shouted Keefe, the second mate. A murmur arose, also, from the men in the rigging.

"Where did *you* come from, my man?" said the Captain, turning short, and seizing a handspike from a tall, strong fellow who had it lifted in air with both hands.

"I 're gown to heave it at un!" cried the man.

"Wait till I bid you, or take care I don't heave you overboard!" said Captain Nolesworth. "Go forward!"

Again there was an exclamation from the men; the Captain turned, and the figure was gliding fast from the waist of the vessel, where it had been, toward the stern. The mist waved about it, as if the two were of one. Its head seemed bound up with a misty band, as that of a corpse is bound.

A movement behind him made the Captain turn quickly; the man whom he had disarmed had his huge weapon raised, again, with both his hands, ready to throw it, as before.

The Captain rushed upon him; but the ugly handspike, ere Captain Nolesworth reached him, was whirled across the deck;—and then a cry, such as had not yet been heard or uttered there, went up; a strange ghostly woman's cry; not made of words, and, as it were, half stifled in the utterance.

The Captain uttered an answering cry, himself, and there were confused voices of the crew, as Captain Nolesworth, in an instant, throttled and threw down the thoughtless ruffian. When he sprang up, and to the lee-side, nothing was there but the bulwarks with thick dew upon them; aft was the hatch over the companion-way; the wheel, deserted,—and, beyond, two dark, human figures against the stern-railing. There was mist everywhere; but of the animated form of mist, which, slight and unsub-

stantial itself, had made stout men to shake, there was no trace. He hastily looked over at the vessel's wake ; but human eye could see only a very little way ; no glittering bubbles were there ; the great waves rose and fell, under a close cloud of fog.

The Captain took the deserted helm in time to prevent the ship from getting herself taken all aback.

—"I had to run, to keep this fellow, here, from making way with himself, sir," said the second mate.

"He wouldn't have gone any further than the stern-boat, I don't think," said the master ; then, dropping the sneer, his voice became changed and sad, as he said, as if he were continuing a conversation,—“and what became of her ?”

"I don't know, sir," answered the second mate. "I couldn't see the last of it ; but, as sure as I'm standing on this quarter-deck, sir," he continued, in a low voice, apart, to the Captain, "I saw that face, and it was Lucy Barbury's."

Keefe was a Peterport man ; the Captain was a Peterport trader.

"It did look like it !" said he, looking up at the sails and then down into the binnacle. All was still, but the rising wind and washing waves.

A spirit, out of another state of being coming back, cold and disembodied, but wearing still an unsubstantial likeness to the body that it used to wear, among quick men, of flesh and blood,—the hair will creep, and the flesh crawl, at thought of it.

The men,—most, or all of them, for their remissness had been tolerated, for the moment,—drew aft ; and all was silent, but the whirring wind and washing waves. By-and-by, a voice among them murmured,—

"Ef we had akept out o' this 'am fog! They things are made of it."

"Ef we hadn' asailed tull to-morrow!" said another. "We got a warnun, ef we 'd give heed to it, when we found our boat aboard, last evenun, with ne'er a hand to row her!"

"Mr. Keefe," said the Captain, "you will get your watch together, if you please; and let's have things orderly, again; and men!" he added, in a steady tone of authority, "if you're afraid, I'm not. I know you're good fellows; but you'd best leave talking, and let me and the officers of the brig, manage our own business. You can go about your work; I don't think many of you know where you've been, this last while.—You'll put a man at the wheel, sir, if you can find one.—Come now," said he, by way of putting heart into the crew, who had not yet recovered their composure, "which of ye 's got his sense about him?"

"Captain Noseworth," said one of the men, "I sid un go over the side just like a great white bird, in a manner, and that was the last of un. It was about so big as a eagle; much the same."

"When did you ever see an eagle," inquired the Captain.

"Oh! sir, I never did see one, but a portray—"

"And where were you, sir?" asked the master, again.

"I were just hereabouts, sir, as you may say," returned the man.

"And standing up on your feet?" asked the master.

The sight-seer was silent. The first mate, whom the Captain now saw, for the first time since he had turned in,—being sick,—at twelve o'clock, answered for him; he

wasn't on his feet, when I picked him up off the deck, face down, a while ago."

"I'm afeared you'll laugh on me," said another, "but *I* was on my feet, and, to the best o' my notion, it went right down through the deck, and never went over the side, at all."

The mate on being asked, said that he turned out of his berth, when all that running was on deck. "He didn't know what was to pay, unless the foremast was walking off and the men after it."

Captain Nolesworth was a plain, matter-of-fact seaman, of fifty years' age, or upwards, and very sensible and well-informed. The suns of many climes had not in vain, done each its part in giving to his face its deep, dark hue; nor had the winds of many countries breathed and blown upon him, and the various foliage waved, and the many-shaped and colored houses and towns of men shut him in, and the many-tongued race of men under all different governments, and with all different manners, dealt and talked with him in vain. He was a listening man, and at the same time, hearty and cheery, where it fell to him to be so, and always ready to have it fall to him.

He was no Newfoundlander, though trading for so many years into and out of Newfoundland. He was not superstitious, and never in his life (so he wrote) had seen so much as an approach to confirmation of the hundred stories of supernatural appearances that he had heard and read. Still he was a man; and man is sure that there are angels and spirits, or ghosts and disembodied shapes; at least there is a fear, where there is not belief, that in the smooth, unbroken wall that bounds between the world of flesh and that of spirit, there are doors, where we

cannot see them, that open from the other side. Moreover, the very faith of Christian people assures them that intercourse has been, and therefore may be, between the beings of another state and those of ours; the question, in any case, is, therefore, as to the fact and reason of the special case, and not the reason or fact of such things generally. That they are of the rarest, and only for God's special purpose, (unless men can contrive to be familiar with the devil's ministers,) we know. The sacred common sense of men, where it may use its nostrils and its eyes, laughs at, or is disgusted with the legendary marvels of the Romish Breviary, and the attempted systems of the dealers with familiar spirits!

"The very time!" the Captain said; "and you met nothing on the companion-ladder?"

"No sir, not a thing. The first I heard was after I came on deck. I see you was busy and I've only heard what the men had to say.—It's an uncommon queer piece of business!"

"Well now, boys, we've had enough of this," said the Captain. "The fog's clearing off; let this thing go with it;" then looking at his watch by the binnacle light, (for day was not yet begun,) he said, "Let them strike one bell there, forward, Mr. Keefe." A half-hour had passed since this strange scene began, although the phantom had been seen for a few minutes only.

"Get those studding-sail-booms rigged out, sir, if you please, as they ought to be;" added the master; and from that time forward, he kept the men for hours occupied in different ways, until the day had been long clear and bright, and the brig was fifty miles away from Newfoundland.

The wind came fresher and fresher; the wind of all

winds for them; and the tumbling waves tried to keep up with the swift vessel, as she ran through the water, carrying all sail that she could carry, because the Captain said they would be likely to want wind before they saw Madeira.



CHAPTER LVI.

THE GHOST AGAIN.

CAPTAIN NOLESWORTH had persuaded the chief mate to go down again ; and while he himself staid on deck, until late in the forenoon, and kept an eye to every thing, yet, sometimes, leaning upon the quarter-rail, with his back to the deck, he seemed to lose himself in thought.

It was about ten o'clock in the forenoon, that the master went below ; and, presently coming up, called to the steward to go down forward, and see what was against the bulk-head door ; (for in the " Spring-Bird " a door opened from the cabin into the hold.) The man sent had scarcely disappeared before he came out of the hatch again, in all fright.

" It's the ghost ! " said he ; and the cry made a new stir on board. The second mate, who had just laid himself down on deck, sprang down the hatchway, and the Captain hurried from the cabin and followed him.

The weight that lay against the bulk-head-door, was indeed,—as they could make out by the daylight coming down through the broad opening in the deck,—a girl's body. It lay, asleep or dead, with the right arm under the cheek, the eyes closed, and the rich, black hair, loosed

from under the cap, lying like a black flood upon the shoulders.

"Well! Well!" said the Captain, throwing up his hands.

"That's her, and no mistake!" said Mr. Keefe; and the two lifted her tenderly, as sailors do, and opening the door against which she had leaned, carried her through and laid her on the cabin-floor.

"This must be something she's taken," said the Captain; "but how, on earth, did she come aboard of us, after all?" (It must be remembered that he had sailed four days after her disappearance.)

"That boat didn't come aboard without hands, that other night," said the second mate.

They lost no time in applying restoratives, such as years of experience had made the Captain familiar with, and his medicine-chest furnished; and presently brought her to consciousness.

"There! Thank God!" said the master.

"Amen!" said the mate and second mate.

She looked a little wildly, and her mind was a few moments in gathering itself together; and even then, she was weak and faint; but it was Lucy Barbury, herself, a good deal worn and wasted, but with something of her own brightness in her eye, and of her own sweet smile at her lip.

She spoke first, asking abruptly:—

"How did I get there?"

"That we can't tell you;" said the Captain, "if you can't tell us."

"Are father and mother alive?"

"Yes," said Captain Nolesworth, and then turned to his second mate: "Here's Mr. Keefe," said he, "that knows all about things, better than I do."

The second mate answered every thing very satisfactorily; and then, putting a check upon their own curiosity, they had some tea and brewse,* made in the best art of the ship's cook, and by the time she had satisfied her appetite, (which was good enough to encourage the captain much,) she was put in possession of one of the two state-rooms that the brig counted and left to rest.

The brig was a changed thing with her on board. Had she had but the history of the last night about her, it would have been much; but every sailor in the ship was soon talking of the lovely and wonderful character of her life at home.

The wind grew lighter as day declined; but the sick girl grew better there at sea,—perhaps was already getting better when she came on board, and here she was, missed and mourned in Peterport, and strangely enough, wandering off upon the ocean.

“If we hadn't been all fools together last night,” said the captain, when he was out of her hearing, “we might have stood a chance of landing her; but we must make the best of it now.”

Her story was soon told when they could get it; she only remembered being at Mr. Urston's and seeing Mrs. Calloran, before finding herself in a room with two nuns, at Bay-Harbor. They told her that Father Nicholas was offering up the mass for her, and the Sisters were fasting and praying for her, and she would go home as soon as she was well enough. She did not know how many days she had been there, for her memory of the time was much confused, and of the day of her escape particularly, whether from the effect of medicine or some

* Ship-bread soaked into a pulp in warm water.

other cause, her recollection was not distinct. She heard them speak of the "Spring Bird" being about to sail for Madeira, and after the nuns were in bed, between nine and ten o'clock, she put on a white dress which had been made in the nunnery for her, threw a cloak and hood over her and escaped. She had a sort of fancy in her mind at the time, that she was a slave whose story she had read. To scull a boat was easy and natural to her as to walk the street.

"Yes, that's the way our boat came aboard, when we were ashore, all hands but Dick (he's a bright chap!). It would be almost a good job to pitch that letter we got from the nunnery for Funchal, into the sea to the sharks," said Keefe.

—"So that youngster that wanted to ship with me,—the one that was going to be a priest,"—said the captain, by way of particularizing, "is a cousin of yours?"

Lucy colored. "Not my *first* cousin," said she.

"Well, he looked like a fine fellow, only he was out of heart when he came to me."

Lucy, in her innocent way, began eagerly,—

"Was that after——?" and there stopped.

"I don't know what had been before it," said the Captain, significantly, and smiling at the same time; "but it was before you went away. He gave that all up though, and he's safe enough at home, I think."

Time went on. The Captain did his best to keep her in good spirits, and was a cheery man, and everybody on board was ready to do any thing for the pretty maiden's pleasure. The only real chivalry extant in this age is in sailors, and they treated her like a queen. A great many things were continually contrived and done, to amuse her; but it will easily be thought, that though her

strong constitution rallied from the fever, yet it was impossible for her to be happy or at ease, knowing that at home there must be mourning for her as for one lost, and that gray hairs most dear, might for her sake be bending in sorrow toward the grave.

Still no one tried to entertain her, so hard as she to cheer herself.

The passage to Madeira was a long one. After their first fine favoring wind came a dead calm, and twelve hours after a gale began to blow under the summer sky, and blew them down many a league, and then they worked up again, past the Azores as well as they could with fickle baffling winds.

It was clear weather when they first got sight of land, some sixty miles away, and then the towering peaks rose up more and more plainly, and as they drew in towards Funchal in early evening, the luxuriant light and dark green of the foliage showed themselves through that atmosphere, which seems to be the property of such a climate, and there came out over the water sweet smells, that had been gathering for the many centuries that this lovely spot has lain under its sun; but the eyes of our Newfoundland maiden were full of tears for the homely island, poor and barren, that held her father's house, and for those that she knew had wept and still were weeping for her.



CHAPTER LVII.

MRS. CALLORAN'S REVELATIONS.

THE letters from Captain Nolesworth and his second mate, containing this intelligence from the lost maiden, had been sent from London, (to which place the "Spring Bird" had gone with a cargo from Madeira,) and the writers "expected to be in Newfoundland, if nothing happened more than usual, as soon as the letters."

As Mr. Wellon read, he kept his horse at a brisk walk toward Bay-Harbor, and as he finished reading, informed the carrier, who had managed to keep by his side, that Skipper George's daughter was on her way home from England, and then gave a kind message to the astonished man of letters for Skipper George, to be left at the River-head of Peterport, at Mr. Piper's. "I'll take it down to un myself," said the man, who was athirst for more intelligence about this strange case. Mr. Wellon then hurried forward and found the Attorney-General still at his lodgings.

"It's good we couldn't hang him for murdering her," said the Attorney-General, when he had heard the Parson's story; "though he deserves it for other things that the law wouldn't hang him for; but Bangs and Ladford were right, and they must have had her drugged when they

took her from Peterport, and when they were showing the Yankee round the nunnery. I wish he'd had a good taste of prison with Mrs. Calloran. We can have him again, and cast him in exemplary damages, if you like. Is there anybody to prosecute? I'll get it argued and without fees."

"I think we could manage that," said Mr. Wellon, thinking.

"We will manage it somehow," said the lawyer.

Meantime the news went stirring up the people all round the Bay, and bringing happiness to more than one fond heart in Peterport.

A warrant was got out for Father Nicholas's arrest again; but Father Nicholas was not to be found.

Judge Bearn determined to prolong his stay for a few days, to attend to the preliminary steps of the case, (as it was likely to be a proceeding very unpopular with the Roman Catholics;) but the Priest could not be found at the Mission premises, nor anywhere else, and the best information that could be got of him was, that he had been in the house the night before, at about nine o'clock. From that time nothing had been seen of him.

The packet-boats in the Bay were overhauled, and for a day or two all places in which there was any likelihood of finding him or hearing of him, were visited in vain.

On Saturday Mr. Wellon, before going home, called on the Attorney-General and learned the result.

"Depend upon it, he's one of those persons that go through this world unwhipped," said the Attorney. "It's one of those cases that enforce Bishop Butler's argument for future retribution.—Calloran would be rather small game. Wouldn't she?"

“O yes!” said the Parson; “but I should like her account of the way in which it was done, to fill up the breaks in our story;—if we could get it.”

“I fancy that wouldn’t be hard,” said the lawyer, “that constable of yours seems to have an instinct for nosing her out. We’ve kept him for the week, as he seemed a good fellow, and I’ll set him on, and hear his report of the experiment this afternoon, at Castle-Bay;—I’ve a little business there with an old servant.”

Gilpin was easily got, and accepted the commission with some satisfaction.

Mr. Wellon, having occasion to stay in Bay-Harbor, gave him afterward a message for Skipper George.

“Couldn’t you ask him to come over to Castle-Bay?” inquired the Attorney. “Lawyers are not a sentimental race, and when we’ve done our best with a case, are apt to dismiss it; but I confess I should like to see this father.”

The Minister hesitated. “I shouldn’t like to summon Skipper George to come to me,” said he. “I’ve made an appointment with him at his own house; but if you desire it, sir, he’ll come with pleasure, no doubt.”

“No, no; I’ll take a hint from your example; why should I be summoning him up and down? I may find time to go round and see him.”

The two rode up to Castle-Bay together, and as they came to a turn of the road near the beach, having been remarking on the gentle beauties of the landscape, which showed themselves, one after another, as the riders advanced, the legal gentleman exclaimed,—

“That must be your Skipper George, now;” as it was,—in Gilpin’s company. He came along the beach, tall, strong, and trusty-looking as a mast. There was a

glad look in his face that lately had not been there. In saluting his Minister, the homely man's tender and affectionate deference was beautiful.

"This is the Honorable Attorney-General, that pleaded the cause at Bay-Harbor," said the Parson; and the fisherman bowed, with very grave respect, to the eminent lawyer, while the constable's eye twinkled and his face glistened, on the occasion.

"'Twas very kind of 'ee, sir, and I humbly thank 'ee; but I'm glad there hasn' any body done a murder."

"And I'm glad your daughter is alive to come back," said the Attorney. "Few parents have such children, to lose and recover."

"A child is a child, I suppose, sir; but she's a wonderful child for the like o' me, surely, sir. Ef it's the Lord's will for Lucy to come back, there'll be a many proud to see her, I believe."

At the moment, while he spoke, something caught his eye, to seaward, from which, having glanced at it, he turned hastily away; then, looking straight upon it, while his companions having followed the direction of his eye, could see the square, white canvas of a vessel coming up the Bay, he said:—

"It's Skipper Edward Ressle's schooner, from the Larbadore."

Of course, then, it was not the "Spring-Bird," bringing his daughter, as a less sure glance might have mistaken it.

"In good time, ef it's His good will," he said, again, answering, in words, to what might have been an unspoken thought of his companions, and doubtless was his own thought.

"'Twould be too much trouble for 'ee to go down to

my house a-purpose, sir ;—and this excellent gentleman,” he said to the Minister.

“I must go down, of course,” said Mr. Wellon.

“And I’ll go about my business,” said the Attorney-General. “These parsons have the advantage of us ;—you have to do with all the best people ; and the best part of all people.”

“Not always the best,” said the Minister ; “but in a way to give us inducements enough to be true and honest to our office.”

“Ministers are a comfort to a body, surely, sir ; an’ it didn’ seem altogether right after the news comed, tull we could get our reverend gentleman to make a bit of a pr’yer.”

“We’re all interested in the constable’s news, if he’s got any,” said the Attorney ; “and we may as well hear it, together. How is it, Constable ?”

“It’s nothing much, sir,” said Gilpin ; “but it makes it all out, though.—If it wouldn’t be too tiresome stopping here in the road,” he added.

All objection removed, he proceeded to tell his short story ; his hearers listening curiously. Skipper George looked the least curious of the three.

Gilpin, entering zealously on the discharge of his commission, had made his way, with a half constabular and half neighborly air, into Mrs. Calloran’s presence in the kitchen.

Mrs. Calloran was by no means cordial, and did not ask him to sit down. Her daughter was more hospitable ; and Gilpin was quite at his ease.

“Mrs. Calloran,” said he, “now Father Nicholas has gone off, and left his confession with Mr. McMannikin, his honor, the Attorney-General, doesn’t want to proceed

against you, you know. Skipper George's daughter 'll be home in a day or two, and we might get all cleared off before she comes. It isn't worth while for you to be the only sad one, when every body in the harbor's rejoicing."

Mrs. Calloran looked by no means inclined to merry-making. The constable persisted.

"Did she get any thing to eat while she was here," said he, "except the medicine the priest gave her?"

"The praste gave her no medicine, then," said Mrs. Calloran.

"You know what she got," continued Gilpin, not disconcerted; "I mean the priest and the nuns, together."

"'Twas *meself* gave her the midicine," answered the woman, true to the fact, or to her instincts, but not true to her secret.

"But it isn't true that you made a sick girl eat fish and pork?"

"She took niver a sustenance o' food, thin, whatever time she was in it, long or shart."

"But wouldn't it have been better to have the doctor before giving the medicine?"

"An', sure, wasn't it the docther we had, then? an' Father Nicholas, nor the ladies, ordhered niver a drap to her, but he just bid the docther make it for her; 'something to take the pain out of her, and make her rest good.'"

"But did they knock her head against the rock, going down the Worrell?" asked the constable, continuing his inductive process.

"Indeed, she can't say that; and no one else can say it, ayther; for she was aslape, and niver stirred hand nor foot."

"Well, I don't want to spoil your story; but the

Attorney-General is wiser than I be : he'd get the rights of it better. He's just over here, at Castle-Bay. You'd only have to tell it to him once, and be done with it. You didn't get a chance while they thought she was murdered."

"I don't think it's much I need bother with the Attorney-General, or anny o' them," said Mrs. Calloran, in whose mind the prosecuting officer held no niche of honor, probably ; "no : not if he was after coming to me, itself,—let alone gown to um."

"Well, you may as well tell your story to me, then," said the constable ; "and I'll do the best I can with it."

"Me story, is it? 'Deed, then, I think ye may jest tell yer story, yerself."

"Well, well, Mrs. Calloran," said Gilpin, "you're free to do as you please ; only, I wanted to do you a friendly turn, and have it all done with, before she comes back. You might say how you got her."

"I *niver* got her. Sure, 'twas Almighty God an' His Blissed Mother brought her to me, like a fish to the hook, in a manner. 'Glory be to God!' sis I. 'Sure, Herself brought her to this,' sis I, seein' 'twas the Day o' the Consumption o' the Blissed Vargin, 'twas. Wasn't she quite spint, beyant, by the fence? an' what should I do, but tuk her in me arms, and brought her in and laid her an the bid? 'Sure,' sis I, 'Lucy, dear, it's dyin' y'are ; an' won't ye die in the true Church?' sis I. 'I've no doubt,' sis she ; jest that way : 'I've no doubt,' sis she."

"But how could you get the doctor to her, before they carried her away?" asked the constable, making no comments.

"Wasn't he at Barney Rorke's wife that got the sprain, just beyant?" asked Mrs. Calloran. So, I called um.

“ ‘ Good mornin,—no, but good evenun to ye, Dr. More,’ sis I. ‘ I hope y’are will, sir,’ sis I. ‘ I want yer opinion,’ sis I, if ye’d be plased to walk this way. It’s some one that’s dyun, sir,’ sis I. With that he came in (’twas a little dark, with the shawl pinned at the windy):—‘ Don’t go too near her face, for fear her breath’s infractious,’ sis I. ‘ I didn’t bring a light, sir,’ sis I.—‘ Indeed, it’s not needed, Ma’am,’ sis he. ‘ Isn’t she spacheless and sinseless, Ma’am?’ sis he.—‘ That’s it, sir,’ sis I, ‘ exactly.’—‘ An’ did ye sind for the praste, Ma’am?’ sis he. ‘ I hadn’t time, sir,’ sis I, ‘ ’twas that sudden; but I’d give the world for um, this minit,’ sis I.—‘ Thin, Ma’am,’ sis he, ‘ my deliv-er-id opinion is she’ll niver come out o’ this, without a mirycle af Holy Churroh,’ sis he. An’ with that the door opened, just upan the very word, an’ his riverence, Father Nicholas, came in, an’ found the way she was; an’ I tould um the words she said about the Churroh; an’ he said she ought to have the best of care; an’ he asked Dr. More, ‘ Had he anny dyne to give her to quite her.’ ”

“ And who’s Dr. More? ”

“ He’s a good Catholic, thin,” said Mrs. Calloran, decidedly; an’ he’s chape—”

“ And a wise fellow,” said Gilpin.

“ Why wouldn’t he be, then? ” said she, warmly. “ Himself as good as tould me that the rist o’ thim knew nothing; his name’s Dochter Patrick McKillam More; an’ it’s something to the Duke Gargyll, he is (only *he’s* a Scotsman and a heretic); an’ he’s called a veterin surgeon (it’s likely he’s surgeon to the troops at Harbor Grace, or something; an’, indeed, ’twould be a good day they’d get a good Catholic Irishman to be surrgeon to the British Army). ”

"Did you get her baptized by the Priest?" asked Gilpin, blandly.

Mrs. Calloran stirred the kitchen fire: "I'm thinking it's small good her baptism 'll be to her," she said, rather aside.

"But you got her baptized?"

Mrs. Calloran this time was silent.

"Well!" said the constable, "I must say, I think you and the Priest, and the nuns, too, (I don't say any thing about your 'veterin surgeon to the British Army,' as ye call him,—that's a horse-doctor,—for I suppose he's a great booby;) I think you all deserve a good lesson, if you didn't get it. I'd advise ye next time your neighbor's child comes in your way, when she's lost, don't you steal her."

"A simple lesson in morals that she'll do well to profit by," said the Parson, commenting upon Gilpin's story when it was finished.

"We know whom to look to if any more Protestants disappear," said the Attorney; "and have a key to the method of kidnapping. Well, it was for fear of the young lady running off with Mrs. Calloran's nurse-child, it would seem; I trust (if he'll turn Protestant, and there's no great objection) that Mrs. Calloran will live to see that feat performed."

The father, quite absorbed with the circumstances of his daughter's disappearance, which he now heard for the first time, said to his Minister,—

"So that's how it was, sir! There are strange things in this world, surely; but the good Lord's over all!"

The party here separated; and we leave the lawyer to attend to his business at Castle-Bay, and the man of prayer to go and present before God the family offering in Skipper George's house.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE JUDGE'S ESCORT.

THINGS did not go quite smoothly elsewhere.

On the day of the second issuing of a warrant for Father Nicholas's arrest, Mr. McMannikin, the magistrate, (or somebody for him,) had come out with the publication of a deposition dated August Fifteenth, taken by him of the same Father Nicholas, in which the priest rehearsed, on his oath, the particulars of Lucy Barbury's being "brought to the care of the Sisters of St. Ursula, of Bay-Harbor, as one sick, and desiring to enter the shelter of the Catholic Church; that she was kept there for four days and ministered to; that she disappeared; and deponent did not know whither she went nor where she was."

This vigilant magistrate was dealt with to get from him some satisfactory explanation of his two months' silence and sudden publication. He said that his object had been to prevent dangerous suspicions from being excited against certain parties, while at the same time there was no relief to be brought to the family and friends.

Mr. McMannikin was relieved of his office in consequence of his peculiar views of his duty in it.

The feeling of those to whom the legal proceedings in the case of the priest and nuns had been very offensive,

grew still more uneasy and angry in all parts of the Bay, as it was also reported to have grown in the capital. The rest of the community at the same time felt warmly and strongly in behalf of the assertion of the law.

On Sunday, news came to the Bay which, while it gave evidence of the state of the excited parts of the community in St. John's, stimulated still more the corresponding parties in the towns and settlements of Conception Bay and neighborhood.

The wife of Judge Bearn happened to be a Roman Catholic, while her husband was a member of the Anglican Church; and while the Judge was staying in Bay-Harbor, she, having remained in the capital, went on Sunday morning to the Chapel, at which she attended whenever she went to mass. There had been no very cordial feeling towards this lady on the part of the straiter of her fellow-religionists; and more than one exhibition of dislike had been made since her husband had engaged in the legal proceedings in the Bay. The lady (who had a high spirit) had been in nowise intimidated.

On this Sunday morning, as the Judge's carriage, containing Mrs. Bearn, was about entering the inclosure of the chapel, a priest had suddenly seized the horse's head, and, applying at the same time his cane to the animal's back, had turned him restive and frightened away; while a number of men, women, and children, instigated by his example and precept, pelted the carriage as it left the chapel-yard. The coachman was appalled; but the lady did not at all lose her presence of mind, and tried to make him bring his horse back to the scene of the encounter. She did not succeed; and, alighting, made her way to the chapel door between dark looks and insulting words, (which, however, were kept in check by the manly

spirit of a larger number of those present ;) and being by the priest forbidden to enter, and driven from the steps, went home on foot.

These facts were soon known throughout the town, and in the afternoon a large throng of people pressed about the judge's house, and his lady was escorted by hundreds of people to and from St. John's Church, to which she had frequently gone with her husband, her carriage being dragged through the streets by as many as could in any way take part in that operation. The governor of the colony (a military man) very wisely had troops in readiness to support the civil authorities in preventing a collision between the respective parties, and to protect the judge's house from the danger of assault. It was understood that Mrs. Bearn would henceforth forsake the Roman Catholic religion forever.

The news of these things came, after the old habit of news, in some unexplained way, to Bay-Harbor, before Sunday was up. It was the Judge's intention (there being nothing to detain him longer) to go back to the capital on Monday morning. Early on that morning a deputation of prominent citizens of the Bay waited upon him, begging him to accept of a schooner, to be manned and fitted up by them, for his passage to Portugal Cove or to St. John's, as he might prefer ; and to allow of a guard of honor which they were desirous of furnishing him. The Judge, who was a frank, hearty man, thanked them for the kindness shown and meant, reminding them, however, that it would be strange for him to seek protection anywhere but in the law ; but that he had no fears whatever. He begged them farther to consider, that while he trusted that he had done his duty, yet, to allow of such a demonstration as that proposed, might give to his conduct

the very thing that it did not deserve—a party-color. At the same time, however, he prayed that there might ever be in the community a feeling that, only by the energetic and fearless execution of the laws, was there any lasting security for life and property.

According to his wish, the schooner which had been proposed for his conveyance was not brought forth; but the day being fine, and there being little wind, the beautiful Bay gleaming smoothly where the sunlight fell, and lying smooth far as the eye could see, a scene of unexpected life showed itself, as the boat bearing the Judge was passing out of the harbor. A countless fleet of punts and other boats, adorned with the house-flags of merchants in different parts of the North Shore, and manned by volunteer fishermen in their blue jackets, swarmed out of coves and nooks for convoy. A speech, which the Judge addressed to some of the nearest of the parties in the demonstration, was entirely drowned with cheers; and all the men contrived (or happened) to keep at such a distance as not to be able to hear a word of scruple or objection.

It was a fair and affecting sight, such as Conception Bay never saw before, and may not soon see again. They measured with their oars and gladdened with their waving colors every foot of a wide way across the water; and from behind Belle-Isle started forth to meet them as they drew near, another swarm as great of South Shore punts, wearing the flags of merchants of St. John's. The wondrous show was therefore still more wonderful.

They swept round the southern end of the fair island in long and wide array, and spread over the level space between it and the cove. The island seemed to be a part of the fair pageant, as it lay with its broad, hollow, slop-

ing side in the full sunshine, and having a white beach under it, like a fresh covering laid down upon the summer's deep for it to rest upon. Lying thus, as if sunning itself on the smooth plain of water, it seemed to smile peacefully on the scene.

Once on shore the Judge asserted his inclination, and would not budge until the last of a crowd of zealous people, who had come down to lead him honorably home, had gone. He then went quietly by the same road.



CHAPTER LIX.

LUCY'S HOME-COMING.

SEVERAL of the schooners, but not all of those that had been, during the summer, at Labrador, had come merrily home, with colors flying and all sail set, and muskets now and then fired off, and with now and then a cheer from the happy crew. The harbor was, of course, fuller of people and more astir with them, than it had been for months ; the harbor-road was more frequented, and disused flakes were thronged.

The story of the strange happenings had been told and retold, at flake and fireside, and now there was a general longing and looking out for the home-coming of the "Spring Bird" and Skipper George's long-lost daughter. The other schooners, too, from Labrador, were more quietly expected. The weather was very beautiful, and summer was gently resting after its work done. The sky was blue as the deep sea ; and just enough spotted with white clouds to show its blueness fairly. The soft and pleasant wind came over and through the inland woods, and blew steadily out over the Bay, to the Fair Island and St. John's.

On such an October day Mrs. Barrè and Miss Dare were walking together down the harbor, and drew near the top of Whitmonday Hill. In outward appearance

Mrs. Barrè had not changed much ; but she was, perhaps, more restless, and sought occupation more eagerly, now that her great work was taken out of her hands, and she had only to wait for the great issue of it. Her husband must be, by this time, in Halifax, if nothing had happened to him, and in a few weeks more, after her long widowhood, she might hope to have him restored to her, from whom she ought never to have been separated, in this short and uncertain life. More than one long letter she had got from him, in the few days that he was detained at New-Harbor, before sailing ; and more than one she had written to him ; and now they were cut off from each other for a while, with the prospect of soon joining their lives together in one, not to be again separated, unless by death.

The two ladies stopped on the top of Whitmonday Hill, and at the moment a white sail was crossing so much of the Bay as was open to them where they stood.

"There's a schooner from Labrador for some harbor up the Bay," said Miss Dare. "She's heading for Blazing Head, now !" said she, again, as she watched the sight which is always so interesting. "She's coming in here, depend upon it ; they expect Abram Marchant next. Let's wait and see her come in."

Mrs. Barrè fixed her eyes upon the moving vessel in silence, and an unusual glow of interest was given, even to their deep seriousness ; the coming in of an absent vessel had much meaning for her.

The fair, broad, white spread of canvas came steadily on ; a most lovely sight to look upon. The wind, as we have said, was blowing out of the harbor, and any vessel entering must tack within it. The sail in question stood steadily across, without stirring tack or sheet, towards Blazing

Head ; she was now fairly inside, and distant two or three miles ; a fine, large craft, and handled beautifully. Now she went about, her sails shook and flapped as she crossed the wind, and then filled on the other tack, and showed all her broadside.

“And what’s the matter with the mosquito fleet? * they’re all coming in, as fast as they can row ; there must be a death on board. No ; she’s got all her colors flying :——It must be *Lucy* ! it must be *LUCY* ! That’s the ‘Spring Bird !’ There’s Uncle’s house-flag ; and——there’s *Lucy* !”

Mrs. Barrè did not escape the excitement that animated her companion ; and tears, that had been so familiar to her eyes, came quietly into them.

“It’s very likely indeed,” said she ; “it’s time to look for her.”

“It *is* she ; I see her at this distance ; that white figure, standing near the stern. Ah ! my dear Mrs. Barrè, don’t cry ; there’ll be a happier return yet, before long ;” and she put her arm round her friend’s waist.

Confident that she was right, Miss Dare began to wave her handkerchief. Certainly, the punts were all coming in for dear life ; while the brig, with her broad canvas, held her way steadily and without a sound ; and presently, when nearly opposite Frank’s Cove, went deliberately and most gracefully about again. This tack would bring her well up the harbor, and she was soon gliding along, outside of Grannam’s Noddle—her hull hidden by the island—and soon she came out from behind it.

There was a woman’s figure, in white, apart from the dark figures of the sailors, and leaning against the quarter-rail, on the lee-side ; and suddenly, as if making out

* The fleet of fishing-punts.

the two ladies, she started, and made a gesture once or twice, which might be an answer to Miss Dare's signal of welcome.

"There! isn't that just like the little thing?" asked Fanny, at the same time turning hurriedly up the harbor. "She isn't sobbing or fainting, though her heart's as full as it can be; but she's too modest to return our greeting! I'll venture to say she's looking the other way, or on the deck. She's a dear girl!—I must be first to tell her father and mother, if I can; shall we go up?"

If Lucy was, indeed, too bashful to believe the signal to be made for her, or that she was recognized, there was some one else on board who was less timid. Captain Nolesworth gallantly took off his hat and bowed, and waved his hat about his head, in silent triumph. There was a busy stir on board, as if the men were full of the importance of the occasion; and on land as well as on the water, a sympathetic movement was taking place; the punts were coming in, at their utmost speed, dashing the water from their eager bows and straining oars; and men and women were coming out of Frank's Cove, and over the hill from Mad Cove, beyond, and out of every little neighborhood. Mrs. Barrè and Miss Dare, however, were before them all; and they hurried on, to keep their advantage, while the brig went her way by water. The Captain's voice could be heard distinctly, as he ordered the men to "clew up the foresail," and then to "let that cracky* bark." In obedience to the last order, a brass ten-pounder stunned the air, and made the far-off hills to echo; and on came the brig, the smoke rolling off, and breaking up to leeward.

Miss Dare reached the top of the ridge that bounded

* A "cracky," in Newfoundland, is a little dog.

Skipper George's little meadow, before there was much stir in that neighborhood, and while the oblique course of the brig had carried her over towards Sandy-Harbor, a half mile or so farther off than when opposite Whitmonday Hill.

Mrs. Barbury, who had been, apparently, standing on a rock a little back from the edge of the ridge, came wildly down, as the young lady went up, staying a moment to ask, "Is it Lucy, Miss Dare?" and saying that "*he* knew it the very first gleam he saw of the brig's canvas." She then ran on, up the harbor, to be at the stage-head before the vessel got there.

Miss Dare went, hastily, a little farther towards the old planter's house, but stopped before reaching it, and turned back. Who can tell a father's heart, that has not one? She could see Skipper George on his knees, by the bedside, in the little room. He had stayed at home that day, for some reason of his own.

With another tack the brig stood over for Mr. Worner's stage, and again fired a gun. The whole harbor, now, was alive; and from every quarter people were walking and running, (little ones trying to keep up with their mothers and elders,) towards Mr. Worner's premises.

"We'd better hold back a little, I suppose," said Miss Dare, as she joined Mrs. Barrè again; "though I should like to see her when she first touches land, and hear the first word she speaks."

Up the harbor went the brig and the boats, by water; and up and down the harbor went the people from the different directions, toward the same point,—Mr. Worner's stage. Mrs. Barrè's chamber-window commanded a view, over Mr. Naughton's storehouse, of Messrs. Worner, Grose & Co.'s premises, which were half a quarter of a

mile beyond; and the two ladies stationed themselves at the window.

The punts were getting in; the brig was drawing up, taking off sail after sail; the people were hurrying, and there was a sound of many voices. The ladies did not stay long at the window; but they, too, followed the current of life up to the place where the brig was expected.

"I haven't seen Skipper George go by," said Miss Dare. "I hope it won't be too much for him."

It was attempted to make way for the ladies; and it would have been done,—though slowly and hardly,—but such was the crowd all over the stage, that they sought refuge in one of the stores, and took their stand at a window in the loft. Never was there such a time in Peterport; never, but at the funeral of the four Barburies had there been such a crowd within men's memory. The stage was covered; the neighboring flakes were covered; the boats floated full; children cried to be lifted up; people stood a-tiptoe; eyes were straining; faces were flushed and eager,—it seemed as if the blood would scarcely keep within its vessels. The men on board the brig went nimbly about their work in perfect silence; every order came distinctly to land. All the lower sails were out of the way; jib, foretopmast-stay-sail, foresail, mainsail, spanker; but there was no woman on deck. The Captain called out,—

"We've got her, Mrs. Barbury, all safe!"

"Thank God!" cried the mother, who was at the outmost verge of the stage; and, before the words had gone from her, there went up a mingled shout and cry from men, women, and children. The brig had come up into the wind, and again the ten-pounder flashed and roared, and the smoke rolled away aft. Women shook hands with one

another and wept ; bright tears were in Miss Dare's beautiful eyes, and tears ran down Mrs. Barrè's pale, soft cheek. Then Jesse Hill's bluff voice was heard (from the water, of course) :—

"I'll take a line* ashore for 'ee, Cap'n Noseward."

"Thank 'ee, Mr. Barbury," answered the captain ; "I'd best bring up in the stream. Somebody bring the father and mother aboard ; will ye?"

Down went the anchor with a splash, and rattling of chain ; and the brig's voyage was, in a moment, at an end.

Two boats were most active and conspicuous, among the many that floated about the vessel, and the two, at the captain's word, drew near the stage. In one Jesse Hill's fur cap and bright hair predominated, astern, and Isaac Maffen held the chief oar ; the other was occupied by young men, and was steered by a silent young man, that was, probably, not unobserved this day,—James Urston.

The latter rather held back, and yielded precedence to Jesse ; and Jesse, coming up to the stage, and having inquired and called for his Uncle George, without success, took in the mother, and made all speed for the vessel's side. Captain Nolesworth had her hoisted in, man-of-war fashion, and, in an instant, the daughter and mother were in each other's arms. The captain, by way of occupying the time, called out,—

"Now, boys, we'll change work, and try how this air tastes, after being on sea so long. Let's have three cheers ! and you, Ghost, set the pitch."

The biggest man among the crew stood forth, sheepishly, pushed forward by his laughing fellows ; but,

* A rope.

whether he gave the pitch or not, three hearty seamen's cheers were given by the crew; an irregular, prolonged cheering came from the land.

After a short time allowed, the kindly neighbors began to ask abundant questions, across the water, to Jesse, who kept his place in the punt at the brig's side, as to whether she "was hearty," and "looked as she used to," and so forth; in answer to which Jesse once or twice repeated that he had not seen her, and they must be patient a little. Meantime, Jesse was busy holding communications with the occupants of several punts near him, which set off, this way and that, like adjutants on a review day. It was soon understood that Skipper George's daughter was to be escorted home with a public demonstration. The field for every thing of that sort, among our fishermen, is the water; and so there was a general bustle to get and bring into service whatever boat was capable of swimming.

Skipper George was understood to be at home; and it was also understood that the Parson had gone down to him.

Jesse himself left his post and hurried over to Mrs. Barrè and Miss Dare, to ask whether "the ladies 'ould be so well-plased to give the people the honor of their company in a bit of a *possession* that was going to be down harbor. Cap'n Nosewood," he said, "was going in 'e's boat, and so was Abram Frank, in Mr. Worner's; and e'er a one would be clear proud to take they." Having gained their consent, he hurried back, and in a minute or two, had passed through the crowd of small craft, and was at the brig's quarter again. James Urston's boat was there, and his drew up alongside of it.

When Lucy appeared at the vessel's side, the welcome given her was enthusiastic. Jesse regarded his wonderful

cousin as a being above his understanding; and everybody held her in much the same estimation; and she never looked more bright and handsome than now. She was rather stouter than she had formerly been; her eyes glanced, and her cheeks glowed, and her black hair floated, as they used, and a pretty little straw bonnet, with bright red about it, made her look sweetly. She glanced down at the two boats, and over all the glad faces everywhere and smiled and blushed. The men all had their hats off, and the women waved their hands, or handkerchiefs, and words of welcome came from every side. No one could have gone through a studied part so beautifully as she went through hers; and every turn of her head and movement of her body, brought forth new shouts from her excited neighbors. Her eyes came back over the same course that they had gone, and passed, last, over the two boats just below her.

Mrs. Barbury was received with much state by her nephew, and escorted to a seat; and then Lucy, on whom all eyes were fixed, was hoisted over the side, and lowered down the little distance from the rail to the level of the punts. Somehow, a slight side-motion was given to the chair; more than one hand was reached towards her; she gave her hand and set her feet, without looking;—but it was into James Urston's boat that she went.

"She's mistook," said Jesse, to whom the programme of his "Possession" was the foremost thing, and who did not, perhaps, (like many other ritualists,) see how things would go on, unless according to the programme.

"No, no, Mr. Barbury," said Captain Nolesworth, laughing, "the ladies know what they're about. That must be the young priest we heard of. It's my opinion she's meant to *take her passage* in his boat."

At this, the public, who are generally quick-witted and quick-hearted in such matters, took it up, and gave "three cheers for young Mr. Urston."

The young man received the distinction and the gratulation in modest silence; Lucy blushed deeply; and Jesse reconciled himself to circumstances.

"Where's Mr. Piper?" cried the chief manager of the "possession." A voluntary flourish, on the fiddle, answered the question, and showed that the worthy Irishman knew what faculty made his company most valuable.

Without loss of time, in marshalling the array, the several boats fell in; the music, under Billy Bow's pilotage, in advance, in the centre column; Jesse following, with a large ensign fastened to a boat-hook, and supported by two men,—which ensign there was not wind enough to spread;—then Lucy, in young Urston's boat; and then—whoever came next, in a long row, while on each side was a parallel line of punts, keeping even way.

The fiddle struck up the National Anthem, and continued to fill a part of the air with melody; the oars hurled back the water, and bravely the procession swept on, not far from shore; muskets now and then, and here and there, breaking forth into joy. The water gleamed and glanced, and the very cliffs seemed glad,—taking up and saying over the sounds from every side.

At Marchants' Cove, an unexpected interruption came. It had been Jesse Barbury's plan to go down round the island, and come back to this cove again; but, as they reached it, Lucy exclaimed "There's Father!" and the punt that bore her, as instantly as if it were moved by her mere will, was urged towards the land,—breaking out of the procession.

The father stood upon the beach, beneath a flake, gaz-

ing, with fixed and steady look, upon his child. She rose, as the boat drew near, and he walked into the water, to his knees, to meet her. Several of the young men turned away, as the brave old fisherman opened his arms, and she embraced him and leaned upon his neck. He lifted her up, as when she had been a child.

"I'm too heavy for you, father," said she.

"Ah! my dear maid," he answered, "ef 'ee could only know how light 'ee make my heart!" and he bore her away to land, as if she had been an infant; and then, holding her hand in his, he turned to his neighbors, and baring his head, said,—

"I thank 'ee, kindly, friends, for all your goodness: and I humbly thank my Best Friend, for all 'E's goodness." He then bowed his head to his breast.

What may have prevented the people generally from noticing Skipper George, until his child's quick eye discovered him, and her hurried words proclaimed him, was the approach of a punt, from the direction of Sandy Harbor, which now came up.

"Wall, I guess ye may's well hold on, Mr. Kames, 'thout you mean to run somebody down," said one of the two occupants, to his companion. "What's t' pay, Mr. Barberry? Lucy c'me home? 'S that her? Ye don't say! Wall she's kind 'o left ye, I guess, hasn't she? b't we c'n go on 'th the meetin'. Tell ye what's the right thing: go to work 'n' organize, 'n' pass s'me res'lutions, 'n' 'spur o' the moment."

As Mr. Bangs spoke, the boats had gathered round; their course being interrupted, and he was the centre of a large flotilla.

"Sh' didn't b'come a Papist, I b'lieve? 'tain't th' fashion, jest now, 't seems."

"Without they haves a miracle to convart 'em, Mr. Banks," said Billy Bow.

"Wall, the's no tellin' 'bout miry'cles," answered Mr. Bangs; "b't 's I's sayin', I guess ye'd better give Mrs. Barberry, there, her choice, whether she'd ruther stay t' the proceedings, or go right home. The's no 'bjection, under the broad canopy, t' havin' ladies:—fact, they're 'n addition."

Notwithstanding Mr. Bangs's intimation, however, Mrs. Barbury had no wish to enjoy that particular privilege of her sex, in being an addition to the meeting, and Jesse prepared to turn his prow to the beach.

"'S goin' t' pr'pose 't Mr. Barberry, ('r Mr. Hill,) there, sh'd take the chair and preside," said Mr. Bangs. "Might let Mr. Urston take Mrs. Barberry, now his hand's in, 'f the's no 'bjection;—*or*, I guess we better make the pr'ceedin's short. Look a'here; you jest take the chair, Mr. Barberry," said he, aside; then to the multitude: "'F it be yer minds, please t' signify it;—'tis a unanimous vote!" (not an individual saying or doing any thing whatever except himself,)—"There, ye saw how I did it," said he again, as prompter, to Jesse; "'s no matter 'bout a chair, ye know.—Look a'here, Mr. Frank," he continued, to Billy Bow, "Guess you'd better move first res'lution."

"Which w'y'll he move, Mr. Banks?" inquired Jesse, anxious to discharge his part.

"Oh! ain't any of ye used to it; wall, shall have to move, myself; you say you second me, Mr. Frank; and then you ask 'em 'f 't's their minds, Mr. Hill. Mr. Chairman, I move ——" (the women and other on-lookers were very much entertained and astonished,) "I move you, sir, that ' We cannot repress the unspeakable emotions

with which we view this inscrutable dispensation.'—— That's one way the' have o' doin' it."

While these lofty and appropriate words and sentiments were addressed to him, the chairman gazed in admiration at the utterer, and from him cast glances, to either side, at the audience, of whom some of the women were a good deal amused, as if it were fun.

"Guess we m't 's well stop there, f' the present," said the mover: "Wunt ye jest try that, first?"

Jesse scratched his head, in the sight of all the people, and Mr. Bangs began prompting him, in a lower voice, distinctly audible everywhere. The chairman, also, began to repeat after him, as follows:—

"Mr. Banks says 'e can't express his unspeakable motions'"—— and then broke.

"Do 'ee mean to say we're clear proud, Mr. Banks?" asked he. "Ef 'ee do, we'll s'y so;" and, turning to the public, said: "Ef we're glad over she coming back, please to show it. Hurray!"

"Hurray!" shouted the people, male and female.

"It is an annual vote!" said the chairman. "There, Mr. Banks!"

The meeting dispersed, and left the water to the gentle wind and sunshine; and a sweet sight was seen on land; how Lucy went to meet and how she met the Minister: but would not let go her father's hand; then how prettily she looked, as Mrs. Barrè and Miss Dare welcomed and kissed her; and then how prettily she lingered to meet and greet her neighbors.

CHAPTER LX.

FATHER DE BRIE'S LAST INTERVIEW WITH FATHER
TERENCE.

LONG years had passed to Mrs. Barrè : but, perhaps, these weeks were longer ; for waiting hope is not the same as waiting expectation. Certainly, she seemed to be wasting under it ; though she threw herself into the joy of the harbor at Lucy's coming back.

October went by, and November came and was going by. The season had been a fine, open, bright one ; and some young people from Labrador, had seen, as they said, "the color of their own country" for the first time in their lives, to their remembrance ; some flurries of snow came about the first of November, and since, but not much cold.

Another person was waiting and looking out,—perhaps with a father's fondness, (but that is not a wife's,) for Mr. De Brie's return : it was Father Terence.

He had left a most urgent message, through a Roman Catholic merchant of New Harbor, desiring Mr. De Brie to wait, just a few hours, at that place, until Father Terence could see him ; and had also provided (to the astonishment of the fishermen,) for news of the vessel to be brought him from the fishing-ground if she passed by daylight. On Saturday, the twenty ninth day of November, early in the morning, the news came into Bay-Harbor,

that Mr. Oldhame's schooner was standing across Conception to Trinity Bay.

It had been chilly, rainy weather, soaking every thing, for two days ; and this day was a dull, dark one, covered with leaden clouds : very little wind blowing.

Father Terence started immediately to cross the Barrens ; having before engaged a stout horse, and taking two guides ; one of whom (Mike Henran, the Peterport landlord,) was also mounted ; the footman having taken the first start, and gained a couple of miles, or so, upon the equestrians.

The good Priest, as he had been urgent in his preparations, so was eager on the way. The smooth road he got over at a good rate, and entered, manfully, upon the broken hubbly path among the stones and stunted firs, and over the moss and morasses. Great mops of thickly-matted evergreen boughs swabbed against him, and sometimes struck him a severe blow, as his great beast surged against them, and then let them slip from his shoulder. Down precipitous leaps, and, in like manner, up to the top of low rocks ; then straining and rolling from side to side, as the beast drew one hoof after another out of a little patch of meadow, soggy with the rain, Father Terence made his way, silently occupied with his thoughts ; except when, occasionally, he became anxious lest his horse should hurt himself in the rough and miry path. Newfoundland horses are used to ways of that sort ; and the one that he now rode, though not familiar with the Barrens, got on very fairly. Between the ponds, however, there are wider meadows ; and Father Terence entering, fearless, upon the first of these, found his horse, after a few steps and a heavy jump, or two, sinking down to the saddle-girths. His mounted guide, (a small man, on a

nimble little pony,) was going over it like a duck or seagull.

The Priest dismounted instantly, and summoned his two attendants to his aid.

"I think he's gittin' someway tired," said he, "his feet's that heavy."

"The ground's very saft, Father Tirence, and the harse is too big an' solid for it," said Mike Henran, of Peterport, seizing the bridle and lifting the foundering horse's head. This operation seemed like working him on a pivot; for, as his head came up, his haunches went slowly down. The other man laid hold of his tail, and lifted. The worthy Priest anxiously surveyed the operation.

To Henran's criticism upon the qualities of his borrowed steed, he assented; saying, "Indeed he's not that light and easy goin' Pishgrew was."

He looked on again.

—"I think ye'll never be able to carry him," added Father Terence, whose experience with quadrupeds had been both slight and short.

The men knew what they were doing. "I thought I'd start um aff this saft place," said Henran, "the way he could rest, a bit; and then we'd try and have him out. Pull um over, on his side, then, you, Brien!" and he held the poor beast's nose down, to prevent his plunging, and the two men together got him partly on his side, and then Brien took the saddle off from him.

"But if the body of him goes in," suggested the Priest, as he saw their manoeuvre, "sure it'll be harder, again, getting it out, towards having his legs, only, in it;" for the Father saw, at a glance, that four slender separate legs, each having special muscles of its own, and having flexible joints, too, could be more easily extracted from the

slough, than a huge, round carcass, clumsy and heavy, and without joints,—if it should once happen to get in, and under the mud.

“But his body’s too big, Father Terence,” said Henran, who was no new hand at this sort of thing; “do ye see the holes iv his legs isn’t wide enough to take it in.”

“Do you mean to leave him, then?” inquired the Priest. “I’m not afraid of him running away; but I think it’s a cold place for him. I think he’s fast, there.”

“Faith, then, savin yer reverence’s presence, Father Tirenice, I’m thinking it’s a fast he’d niver break,” said Henran, who had an Irish readiness at a pun. “We’ll start um up a bit, after a little, and try can we turn um round, th’other way.”

“But how will he get on, with his hind legs better than his fore ones?” inquired the good Father again, very naturally wondering what advantage there could be in trying the horse backwards.

“We’ll have to get um out iv it, ahltogether,” said Henran, “and it’s the shortest way back.”

“But won’t we be able to go over?” asked Father Terence anxiously, for he was eager to be at the end of his journey.

“Brian’ll be to take um round, Father Terence; and if ye’re hurried, I’m thinkin’ we’d best lave um to Brien, ahltogether, for it’ll be the same wid every saft place we come to. The wind’s coming round cold; but it’ll only make it the worse for him breakin’ through, for it’ll cut up his legs and hurt um badly. ’Twill be hard enough, in three or four hours from this, that ye might take all the horses that ever was over, an’ they’d niver lay a mark an it.”

It was slow and hard work getting the horse out. They edged him round, after he had rested, and then lifting him at both ends, urged him until, with furious struggling,—lying down and resting now and then,—he got, by little and little, out to the firm ground, trembling at first all over, and scarce able to stand.

Father Terence adopted the advice, and, at the same time, declined Henran's offer of his own beast; being, as he thought, too big for him to carry, and his late experience having, perhaps, made him loth to take the charge of such a thing. So they budged on foot: Henran leading his horse, an arrangement which was not the least comfortable that they could make; for the wind began to come very bitterly cold, and the exercise kept their blood from being chilled. The little trees, and bushes, and moss, grew dry very fast in the cold wind, and gave them little trouble; but the walk is a long one, and the good Priest was sorely fagged out by the time he trudged into New-Harbor. It is a hard enough journey now; it was a worse one, years ago.

The schooner was beating up the bay against the wind that had so lately come round, and begun to make itself felt; and Father Terence seemed to lose all feeling of fatigue, and was out watching more eagerly than the merchant himself, "*Qui vidit mare turgidum, et Infames scopulos, Acroceræunea*," who knew all the danger that might come with a heavy blow, if the weather should turn out thick.

The weather cleared off fairly, growing colder all the while. The schooner came into the harbor (which is on the west, popularly called the *south*-shore of Trinity Bay) finely, early in the afternoon; and was made safely 'fast' at her stage. The first person that jumped ashore was

Mr. De Brie : grave-looking, bearing marks of the suffering and struggles that he had gone through ; but strong and quick, and shaking himself to feel free from the irksome constraint of the little vessel. Father Terence withdrew out of sight a few moments before the vessel got in.

“Now I must get a guide straight over to Castle-Bay,” said Mr. De Brie, after a cordial greeting to the merchant ; “for I must be there at church to-morrow, God willing.”

“There’s a man just starting,” said Mr. Oldhame ; “for Castle-Bay, too ; but Father O’Toole is waiting to see you ; and has been on the look-out for you for an hour and more. He came across on purpose, I think.”

A shade of regret passed over Mr. De Brie’s face ; and he turned a glance of longing and disappointment toward the woods and Barrens that lay between him and the end of a long separation, and wretchedness, and wrong. He said, “Perhaps he’d take this over for me, and leave it at the schoolmaster’s ; I’ll follow as soon as I may.” He took a thick letter from his pocket, as he spoke, and tearing it open, wrote a few words with his pencil inside, and handed it to Mr. Oldhame, who promised to seal and send it. His eyes then turned for an instant upward ; and then he asked where Father Terence was, and (Mr. Oldhame not being able to say) sought the worthy old gentleman in the merchant’s house.

Father Terence’s feeling was so great at the first moment of meeting as to explain his having withdrawn, that he might have the interview in private and unobserved. Mr. De Brie, also, was very much affected. The old Priest took the younger man’s hand in both his own, and looked upon him fatherly, while his words sought vainly for utterance.

"Y'are welcome home again!" he said, when he recovered himself, "Y'are welcome home! Come home altogether, now!" and as he said these words in a tender, pleading tone of voice, he gently drew the hand he held, as if in illustration.

"Ah! Father Terence," said Mr. De Brie, "thank you, as I always shall thank you, for the kindness I have always had from you! Thank you; but I have found my home at last. I am at home once more."

The old Priest was evidently pained. He still held the hand, and drew Mr. De Brie to a chair, himself insisting upon standing.

"He's away now," he continued, "an' what's to hinder you coming back? 'Twould have been a good job if he'd never been in it at all."

"You mean Mr. Crampton, I suppose?"

"Yes; just Crampton; he's off with himself for good."

"Ah! but Father Terence, it matters nothing to me whether he comes or goes," answered Mr. De Brie.

Father Terence hesitated; but soon said urgently,—

"But don't speak till ye'll hear what I say. I'm well aware of the provocation ye had off him; and, indeed, that's not the worst of him;—I wish it was. Sister Frances, the poor, unhappy creature, has come back; I suppose ye heard. We won't talk about that. God have mercy on us!—But ye'll be shot of him now, and can just take yer time quite and easy with the old man that won't quarrel with ye."

"If you'll let me say a word to that, Father Terence;—love for you would have drawn me more than dislike of him would have driven me away. It was no personal question with me, as I always said. If he had been like

you, or if he had been like an angel, it would have made no difference ; nor, on the other hand, if you had been like him."

Mr. Debreë spoke under restraint. The old Priest looked in his face, while he spoke, and listened, apparently ; but seemed not to hear, as if he were occupied with his own thoughts. Looking still tenderly in his face, he presently spoke in a soothing voice :—

"Your mind's got disturbed and troubled with thoughts, and ye want to rest. Come and help me, then, for a little, and we'll bring you round, with the help of God. Dunne'll be there, for the morrow, in case of me being away."

"No, Father," answered the other, still speaking constrainedly, "I can't do that work again.—I don't know that, to God, my life's work may not be finished, in what I have just done."

"Come and rest, then, and let your mind settle ; and I'll give you the best rooms in the place. You should have his, only it wouldn't be that pleasant ; but the big room up stairs, and the one I called my *library*, you know ; and you shall take your own way, just."

As he mentioned the "library," he forced a smile into the midst of the sadness of his face ; but did not persist in the effort it cost him. His honest features took again their look of affectionate anxiety and distress.

"Ye're doubtful and troubled ; and ye shall do nothing at all but just rest."

"The doubts are gone, and the struggle is over, Father Terence, forever."

"Ah ! That's good, then ; ye can take it coolly. Ye shall have your own time, and nobody'll stir ye.—That's good," said the kind-hearted old man.

"I trust I shall never fail in the respect and gratitude I have always felt for you, Father Terence, and owe you," answered Mr. De Brie, speaking as if the words were not what he had in his mind to say; but as if he were loth to come to the point.

"Why would ye, then? Indeed ye never did; an' we'll get on better, now, than we did," said the old Priest; but with a hesitation as if he, too, felt that something was behind.

"My dear Father Terence,"—— said Mr. De Brie, and paused.

Father Terence hastened to interrupt him.

"Y'are tired; an' how could ye help it, indeed, an' you just off the water? Let's see for a bit to eat, beyond, at Hickson's," said he; and then, recalling in a moment the mutual obligations of hospitality, which none knew better than he, with his Irish heart, he said "No; but we won't be that rude to Mr. Oldhame here, that we'd go out of his house for something to eat. Ye'll be the better of it; an' I'll tell him."

But there was evidently to be an explanation, and Father Terence doubtless saw it. Mr. De Brie rose to his feet, saying,—

"You must not make me sit, my good Father, while you stand. I fear I shall give you pain by what I am going to say; but I am sure you would rather know the exact truth:—I have made open profession of my faith in the presence of the English bishop at Halifax."

"And have ye left the old Church, then?" asked Father Terence, very sadly; not casting off but letting go the hand that he had been holding from the first. "Ye can't have done it!" and, as he spoke, he held his hands together, upward.

“Ah! Father, the Church that has not only the old priesthood, but the old faith, and the old worship, and the old ways, is the old Church;—but I don’t want to speak of that; I only want to say that *it is done*, Father Terence! Doubt and delay are ended; and my solemn, public act has been made.—I am a Protestant, forevermore, until after the Day of Judgment.” In his turn, Mr. De Brie gently took Father Terence’s hands in his own; and the old man let them be held; but sat down in the chair, into which he had before urged his companion. He shook his head, sadly, and then fixed his look upon the other’s face, and kept it there, so long, and with such an expression of disappointment and bereavement, that it seemed to go to the younger man’s heart, for the tears came to his eyes.

The old Priest drew away one hand, and smoothed his decent locks behind; and presently drew the other slowly away, also, and laid one on each knee. He looked, now, neither at his companion nor any thing; but his honest, homely features worked with the feelings of disappointment and hopelessness which he strove to repress, but the witness of which he did not, or could not hide. Then he drew up toward the fire.

“It’s no use me saying more!” he said. “I didn’t think ye’d have done it! I didn’t think it!—Isn’t it growing colder? I think it is.”

In spite of these last words, which implied that the sad business which had brought him over, and was so near his heart was now abandoned, his face still showed that his heart, had not at all got rid of it.

“It has grown winter, out of doors, but you won’t grow colder, Father Terence. You don’t believe a Protestant to be a child of the Devil; or think that he can’t be saved.”

"I don't say for that," said the old Priest, who, whether he asserted it or not, had never, in his life, been any thing but liberal and charitable; "but to leave being a priest, when ye were consecrated and set apart to it!"——

—"But I couldn't keep on with it, when my faith in the Church was gone," said the other, gently.

"I suppose not," said Father Terence, rising and going to the window, his eyes fairly wetted with tears.

"I do not expect to be again intrusted with a priest's work," said his companion; "nor do I wish it. I am satisfied to work out my salvation as a private man, since God so wills it. For the highest and happiest work that man can do on earth, I am not fit; I have shown it."

It was time to break up the interview, which could not grow less painful by being prolonged; but Mr. De Brie stood still, and waited for Father Terence's time. The old gentleman stood before the window for a good while, and moved uneasily, from time to time, as if engaged with his own feelings.

"But must ye go out, altogether?" he asked, at length.

"I couldn't help it. I cannot wish it otherwise."

Father Terence turned round.

"Well, then, I believe ye've acted honestly," said he, again putting out his hand, which his companion came forward and grasped, heartily, and with much feeling. "May ye never be the worse of it!—Stay!" said he, correcting himself; "what's to hinder me saying 'God guide ye!' anny way?"—He hesitated, and then said, "and *bless you*, and bring ye right!"

Mr. De Brie put the fat, kind hand, that he held, to his lips, and kissed it; and then opened the door, and they joined Mr. Oldhame.

The afternoon had been wearing away ; the wind was blowing cold, and heavy clouds were drifting in the sky.

"The man that took the little parcel for me, must be pretty well over, by this time, probably," said Mr. De Brie to the merchant, exerting himself to speak cheerfully.

"Yes, I think he's near Castle-Bay, sir ; and I'm glad of it ; for we're likely to have sprawls of snow, before long, I think,"

"There's no danger in the woods ?"

"Not so much ; but on the Barrens it isn't safe even for an old hand."

Father Terence did his best to be in good spirits, that evening, having accepted the merchant's invitation to stay ; but he was not cheerful, after all. Mr. De Brie was silent, and went often to the window or the door, and looked forth upon the night. They retired early.



CHAPTER LXI.

FATHER DE BRIE IS WAITED FOR, AND SOUGHT.

ST. ANDREW'S Day and Advent Sunday came together, that year, and found the earth all white with snow, six or eight inches deep, fallen in the night. It was falling in the early day, but none fell for two hours before church-time. Rough storm-clouds possessed the sky; the sea looked dark and cold. The wind blew steadily, (not very sharply,) from the north.

The flag was at half-mast, (it being within half an hour of service-time,) and Mr. Wellon was just going out of his door, when, plodding along, well-wrapped in shawls, and with her feet cased, over her shoes, in stockings, Miss Dare appeared, coming up to his house.

"News! and good news!" exclaimed she, when the Minister had got near her. "Mr. De Brie,—or De Brie-Barrè,—is to be at Church, to-day; he's just home, and is to take the Communion, for the first time, with his wife. She wants thanks given for a safe return, if you'll be good enough to remember it."

A bright smile began the sentence; bright tears ended it.

"Thank God, indeed I will!" said the Minister.

She bowed and turned back upon her steps, without

another word. Mr. Wellon, too, instead of going on, first went back, for a few minutes, into his house.

He was absent-minded, that day, in speaking to the different little parties who loitered for him, or for others, and whom he overtook, in the new-broken snow.

Late as it was, he turned aside and went quickly into Mrs. Barrè's house. She was ready to go to church.

"You see I have my bride's clothes on, Mr. Wellon," said she, trying to smile, as she called his attention to her deep-dark dress. The smile flickered and went out, as if the tears that came in spite of her had quenched it.

Ah! no one can tell what is in woman, or in humanity, till he has known a noble wife. There is no other such thing on earth.

Pale and beautiful in her wifehood,—trembling, as the hand told him, while he held it, the look of her not only struck the Minister speechless, but seemed to fill little Mary with a tender awe. The English servant wept quietly; and another woman whom she had got here, sobbed without reserve.

"I do believe," she said,—*"I trust,—that if I should never lift my knees, again, from before the altar, (if God permits me to take that sacrament with my husband,)—I do trust that the strongest wish I had, for this world, has been satisfied."*

"Many long, happy years to you!" said the Minister, pressing her hand and breaking away from her.

"Is it nearly church-time?" she asked, evidently listening, all the while, for a foot-fall in the entry, without.

"Yes; I must say good-bye. God bless you!"

"He might go down the nearest way, if he were very late," she said.

"He *may* be late, too; for it's hard walking this morning," answered Mr. Wellon, lingering.

"Oh yes! you must hurry," she said. "Don't stay with me, much as I should like it. Good morning! I shall follow."

He looked back, often, on his way to church, and from the church-door. As he went up the aisle from the vestry, his step was quicker than usual, and his look nervous. He cast a quick glance all round the church from Mrs. Barrè's seat, on rising from his secret prayer; he read the Exhortation in an excited voice.—For any one who might look closely, it was to be seen that Miss Dare, whose seat was in front of Mrs. Barrè's, and who stood with her eyes intent upon her Prayer-book, had something very unusual in her manner.

The Service went on: Confession, Absolution, Lord's Prayer, Versicles; the Priest said "O God make speed to save us!" the people answered "O Lord, make haste to help us!" when the door of the church was opened, the cord running over the pulley rattled, and a face that would not be forgotten in a lifetime showed itself in the opening. Mrs. Barrè, more widow-like than ever,—her gentle cheek paler, her black dress blacker,—was there, and her look was wild and fearful. She was there but a moment, and the door closed again behind her. She had gone out.

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost!" continued the Priest.

"As it was in the Beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.—Amen!" the people answered.

A strange man opened the church-door, and looking up to the Minister, as if to explain that he could not help it, came right in, and choosing with his eye his man, went

straight to Skipper Isaac Marchant, whose seat was near the door, and spoke a few words in his ear. The skipper glanced up at the Minister a meaning look, laid down his book, glanced up again at the Minister, and beckoning with a slight motion of his head, to some young men of his own family and others, who were near him, and who were all ready, from what they had seen, went out with the man, and they followed.

The church was all full of people,—crowded with blue-jackets; (for our people were all back from Labrador, and they all come when they are in the harbor,) there was beginning quite a stir among the whole congregation, on the floor and in the gallery.

The Priest paused, and leaning over said a word to one near him, and waited for an answer. In a moment it was brought to him.

“LET US PRAY!” he said, breaking the Order of Morning Prayer; and the voice brought the hundreds of people, already excited, (but waiting upon the Minister instead of going forth,) to their knees, with one stroke, like weapons ordered to the ground.

“O Great and Mighty God,” said the Priest, “Who alone doest Wonders, Who seest a Path in the Sea, and a Way in the Wilderness, and—Footsteps *in the* TRACK-LESS SNOW”——one thrill of understanding, or of strange, unworded dread went through all the people, like a chill from the ice, (for there was one, same stir among them, telling of it,) “go forth with us, we humbly pray Thee, to find our Brother, who is lost! and in Thy safe keeping. Oh, keep him safe, whom Thou *hast* kept, and bring him safe, whom Thou hast brought safe through other Wanderings; and oh, Most Loving Father! with Thy sweet Help, bless her who has been long waiting,—through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.”

"Amen!" said all the people; and Priest and people rose to their feet.

The English Priest, trained in the old prayers, had struck a vein of homely English, which all knew and felt, through all their hearts.

"Brethren!" said he, "God has another service for us, towards Him and towards our neighbor this day. Let the women and those who cannot go, pray for us at home.—Now let us ask God's blessing!"

They all kneeled down for it; but the Minister seemed moved by an inspiration:—

"Walter De Brie!" he exclaimed, unexpectedly, and took upon his lips those words, that have cheered and comforted so many near to death, as if he could speak out into the Waste of Snow: "Unto God's gracious Mercy and Protection we commit thee. The Lord bless thee and keep thee! The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! The Lord lift up the Light of His Countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, both now—and—EVERMORE!"

One sob burst forth aloud from Miss Dare; then there was silence, and then the Clerk and people said "Amen!"

And then came the Blessing: "The peace of God which passeth all Understanding, keep your Hearts and Minds in the Knowledge and Love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord! and the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always!"—"Amen!"

The service in the House of God was done, for that day. The people poured forth. The Minister said a few words to Miss Dare, whose face was all marred with tears, and then hurriedly followed them.

"Right over to the Barrens : he was on his way across from New-Harbor !" said he, as he came forth, and hurried on, staying for no parley. The New-Harbor man who had come into the church, had gone on, as fast as possible, before.

The fresh, loose snow was hard to walk in, as they went, but no man thought of lagging. Men crowding the way made way for the Parson, and followed faster. There was no time lost among them. Among the foremost, and every where, among the crowd, were women. For plan and order there is a sort of standing organization of our fishermen, under their skippers, sufficient for the purpose of such a work.

The Parson stopped and looked in hurriedly at Mrs. Barrè's ; the door was open ; the house was empty. He hurried on, faster than before.

Whoever in the harbor had a horse, turned aside to his house, and, harnessing it in haste, mounted and hurried on. The dogs from the whole harbor swelled the sad search. As Mr. Wellon came forth, mounted, his great, black, kind-hearted "Eppy," of whom Mr. De Brie had so lately said, playfully, that "they might be better friends one day," came forth also, as solemnly as if he knew that this was no common errand, and stopped a moment in the road, with his tail down, and sniffed the wintry air from the direction of the Barrens.

The sky was leaden over all, and the cold wind came sharply from the north.

On the little beach, near the meadow, which is so pretty in summer, was a group of three persons ; the middle one being Mrs. Barrè, the two others Miss Dare and Skipper George's daughter. Others lingered not far off.

As he drew near, the Minister threw himself from his

horse, and begged Mrs. Barrè to "trust the search to her friends, who would not leave any thing undone that men could do, and to seek some shelter. She might destroy herself."

"No! No!" said she, wildly, "*he's* in the open air! I might die of waiting in the house. If I can't help it, I'll go into some cottage by-and-by; but not yet."

While she spoke, she gave him silently a letter, and as he looked, somewhat confused by his feelings, at the outside, she said, "The pencil-writing!" and looked at him so earnestly, that he understood it as a mute request, and read aloud, or rather in a voice broken,—

"My own sweet Wife,—Father Terence was waiting, and I can't slight him. I will come, God willing, the first possible moment, to be with you at Holy Communion to-morrow, and never to leave you again. *Do you remember the anniversary, Darling?* That first Day in Jamaica! Look at the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for St. Andrew, and apply them to me.—Till we meet, Good-bye! Good-bye! My best and dearest! God be with you! —Yr. own Walter."

Mr. Wellon made great effort at the words "*Till we meet*;" but in vain. He could not read them in a steady voice, or without tears. Mrs. Barrè kneeled right down upon the snow, lifting her pale, streaming face and her hands supplicatingly to Heaven; her young supporters bore themselves wonderfully.

Mrs. Barrè was not long in summoning that tender strength which she had shown in all her trials, and taking her precious letter in her hand again, said, "Oh! Mr. Wellon, do not wait! Do not let the snow come!"

"Indeed I won't!" said he. "What I would do for my brother, I'll do for him!"

Past groups of men and women, and single riders, the Minister hurried. The snow was still broken before him, as he hurried on, and he passed party after party still, of people from Peterport and Castle-Bay. Near the edge of the Barrens, a place which has been described as it was in summer, he found the foremost; the New-Harbor man that had come to the church, and another stranger, and with them Skipper George, Skipper Isaac, Skipper Henry, young Mr. Urston, Jesse Hill, Isaac Maffen, and Mr. Bangs. They were just coming to a halt. Before them the snow had been broken only by the two men that had come across.

While they were making their short and simple arrangements, one of the strange men told all that there was of story:—

“The gentleman had not come down in the morning, and his chamber was found empty. Mr. Oldhame had instantly made up this little party in pursuit. On their way over they had not expected to find tracks, for they were probably several hours behind him, and much snow had fallen; but they found that *he had not got out.*”

“Perhaps he never laved the t’other side, sir,” said Skipper George to Mr. Wellon.

The Minister looked up at the New-Harbor man with a flash of hope; but it was soon quenched. The man said:—

“’E was for setting off, last evenun, a’most; but they persuaded ’im off it;” and Mr. Wellon recalled the letter, and said, with sad assurance:—

“He wrote to his wife that he meant to come, the first minute he could get away, and hoped to be at the Communion with her to-day.”

"Did 'e, now, sir?" said Skipper George. "Then I make no doubt but 'e've atrieed it;" and the whole company assented.

"They said 'e comed over once, without any body," said the stranger, "an' I suppose 'e didn't think o' the difference o' the snow."

"The poor gentleman! the poor gentleman!" said Skipper George; "but mubbe 'e isn' dead. My maid was brought back, thank God!"—but then, *Skipper George's boys and his orphan nephews had never come alive out of the ice!*

It was speedily arranged that they should push over to the other side of the Barrens; and while one went straight on to New-Harbor, the rest should take every opening through the Woods, and every path into the Barrens, and follow it out. Skipper Edward Ressle and Skipper Abram Marchant, it was said, had gone along the Bay-Road, to cross from other points.

The only hasty preparations now made had been to put off every unnecessary weight to go back with the horses. Some extra coats, and several bottles of spirits, the advancing party took with them. Skipper Isaac gave the parting directions to the men who took the beasts back.

"Ef snow doesn't come in an hour's time, an' keep on, then, an hour after that, again, come in wi' the horses, an' bide an hour, or thereabouts. Ef we'm not here, by that time, we shall stay a' t'other side."

Many had come up, during the short delay, and among them came, panting, the Minister's dog, who had not been able to keep up with his master. As they were now all foot-travellers, he had no difficulty, and went before them, in the dreary path toward the great waste of snow over which the dreary wind came blowing sharply.

The dog mounted the hillock, a little way within the Barrens, and giving a short, sharp bark, plunged down the other side.

The men all rushed together; and in the gulsh at the foot of the opposite rise, lay, black upon the snow, fair in the mid-pathway, a still body, with the dog nozzling at it.



CHAPTER LXII.

THE WIFE'S MEETING.

IT was a drift, two or three feet deep, in and upon which the still body lay. The cheek of the right side was next the snow; the head was bare; the left hand holding, or seeming to hold, the hat; while the right arm was curved about the head. The outside coat was partly open, from the top downwards, as if the wearer might have unbuttoned it, when heated.

The whole attitude was that of one who had laid himself down to sleep at summer-noon, and the face was lovely as in sleep; the eyelids were not fast closed; there was a delicate color in the cheek, and the lips were red. There was a bright, conscious look, too, as of one that was scarcely asleep, even.

"Thank God! he's alive!" said young Mr. Urston, speaking first. "Father Ignatius!" he called, taking him by the hand; then, correcting himself, "Mister De Brie!"

"Ay! he'll never spake to yon name, no more," said the Protestant Jesse.

The Minister, having quickly tried the wrist, was now feeling within the clothing, over the heart, and looking anxiously into the face.

The hair was blown restlessly by the wind; but there was no waking, nor any self-moving of the body.

"N'y," said Skipper George, gravely, "I'm afeard this is n' livun.—Oh! Oh!"

"I saw a house not but a step or two off, 's we come along," said Mr. Bangs, who had been chafing the hands with brandy, and had tenderly rubbed a little, with his finger, inside the nostrils.

The Minister, rising from the snow, shook his head and turned away. "No, no," he said, as if to the question of life.

"Why, he's warm, sir," urged Urston; "certainly, he's warm!" The Constable felt of the flesh and said nothing.

"Shall us take un to the tilt?" asked Jesse. "It's Will Ressle's, Mr. Banks manes.—He's close by."

"By all means!" answered the Parson. "Yes!" "Yes!" said Skipper Isaac and the bystanders.

"See, sir!" said Skipper George, "'e didn' fall down. 'E've laid himself down to rest, most like, where the snow was soft, and falled asleep.—That's bin the w'y of it. I've bin a'most so far gone, myself, sir, afore now."

"See how the hair is smoothed away from his temples," said young Urston.

"'Twas the dog!" answered the old fisherman, tenderly, "wi' tryun to bring un to.—Yes," he added, "'e was out o' the path, when the good n'ybors from t'other side comed along, an' 'e got into un, agen, after—an' 'e was tired when 'e comed to this heavy walkun, an' so—What'll come o' the poor lady!"

As they lifted the body carefully out of the snow, to bear it away, a new voice spoke:—

"Won't ye put more clothing on um, for it's blowing bitter cold?"

Father Terence had made his way from New-Harbor

and approached the group in silence. He offered, for a wrapper, his own great-coat, which he had taken off.

"We've agot store o' wrappuns, sir; many thanks to you, sir, all the same," answered Jesse Hill, very heartily; and others, too, made their acknowledgments.—They wrapped the body, from head to foot, in their blankets, hastily.

Mr. Wellon saluted Father Terence, saying that "he had very little hope—indeed, he feared that there was no hope—of that body being restored to life."

"Oh, dear! I fear not, I fear not!" said Father Terence, wiping gentle tears away. "Why *would* he come? Or why did I hinder um comin' last night?—God have mercy upon um!—Absolve, quesumus Domine, animam ejus," he added, privately, or something to that effect.

Skipper Isaac held the body against his own; Jesse and Isaac Maffen and young Mr. Urston helped to bear it; and they went, accompanied by all the others, as fast as they could go, through the snow, toward the tilt. Skipper George bore the hat, upon which the grasp of the owner's cold hand had not been fast. "Eppy," who had done his dumb part before any, now followed meekly behind. Behind all, came the cold, hard wind from the Barrens, whirling the snow from time to time. The sky over all was hidden by thick clouds, foreboding storm.

Within the tilt all that they knew how to do, was done thoroughly. More than once some one of those engaged exclaimed that the flesh was growing warmer; but life did not come back, and the flesh grew surely colder. The body was dead; and they gave over their useless work upon it, and clothed it as before.—There it

lay; no priest, no layman, no husband, no father, no man!—but it was sacred, and it was reverently treated, as belonging to Christ, who would give it life, again.

Some said,—among themselves,—that Father O'Toole had not staid long.

“What more could 'e do?” asked Gilpin.—“'E did more 'n many would;”—“an' 'e spoke proper feelun, like,” said others.

Crowds had been gathering about the place where the melancholy work was going on; these the constable, and Mr. Skilton and William Frank occupied, drawing them a little apart, that there might be no hindrance, from the numbers, to those who were busy about the dead. The sad, short story, stilled and saddened all. “Dead!”—“Is 'e dead?”—“so near home, too!”—“It's pity for un!”—“But 'e died happy, however!” said different voices.

Presently snow, from the thick sky, began to be borne upon the wind.

Gilpin, at this, hastened to the door, and others, coming out, met him.

“How'll we carry un?” the constable asked, in a low voice. “O' horseback?”

“We was just spakun,” said Jesse, “'twould look like mockun the dead, to take un ridun, to my seemun.”

“Ay, but we've got to be quick about it; the snow's coming!”

“What's to hender we carryun? sure it's more feelun. We wouldn' begredge walkun all the w'y to B'y Harbor, ef 'twas to B'y-Harbor, even ef it snowed, itself?”

“It would be long waiting for a slide—,” said the constable.

“An’ we could’n have un bide in the cold, here, while we was w’itun,” said Jesse, in course.

It was arranged that one or two of the young men, on the best horses, should make their way at the utmost speed, to James Bishop’s, the nearest Protestant house in Castle-Bay, and bring his sled or “slide,” and, in the mean time, relays of bearers were to carry the body onward with what haste they could.

The crowd making a long procession, both before and behind the bearers, trampled the snow ; for the most part in silence. Up the hills and down, many men taking turns at bearing the body, they made their way between the woods ; while sometimes the snow fell thickly, and, sometimes, the thick clouds could be seen before them and overhead.

Three heavy miles they had got over, when the slide met them ; and then the burden was transferred to it ; a sort of dasher, or fender, of boughs was speedily set up to keep off the snow thrown by the horse’s feet ; and they went on : the Minister, Skipper George, Skipper Isaac, Skipper Henry, Skipper Edward, the constable, and others of chief authority and dignity, attended at the sides and behind the sledge ; all beside giving place to them. Suddenly there was a commotion, making itself felt from the foremost ; and then the whole procession opened to either side, leaving the road bare between.

“Cast off the horse !” cried Skipper George in a quick low tone, seeing who was coming. The order was obeyed, as hastily as possible, and then the slide was left alone, in the middle of the way, while the crowd at each side stood huddled upon itself, and hushed.

“Oh, I knew it ! Oh !” said a woman’s voice, heard by every one, with such a moan of wretchedness that

every man seemed to start, as if it were an appeal to himself. Mrs. Barrè, pale as death, with tears streaming down her cheeks, and with light snow lying upon her dark hair and on many parts of her black dress,—bearing in her hand, (as she had borne, hours before,) a letter,—rushed between the sundered crowds, and at the side of the sledge fell down, across the muffled load that lay upon it. Every person near drew away.

Great passion appropriates absolutely to itself the time and place, and makes all other things and persons subordinate and accessory.

For this widowed lady's sorrow the earth and sky were already fitted; and so were, not less, the kind hearts of these men and women.

She lay with her face buried in the folds of the cloak which the Minister had spread over her husband's body, and uttered a fondling murmur against the wall of that desolated chamber, as, not long ago, she had murmured fondly against the strong, warm bosom of her recovered love. Many by-standers sobbed aloud.

Then she lifted her head, and turned down the covering from the face.

"Oh, Walter!" she said, clasping her two hands under the heavy head, and gazing at the stiffening features, "Oh, my noble husband!—My beautiful, noble husband!" then, shaking her head, while the tears dropped from her eyes, said, in a broken voice: "Is this all, Walter? Is this the end?—Yes, and it's a good end!" And again she buried her face on the dead bosom. "Well!—Oh, well! I did not seek you for myself!—It never was for myself! No!—No!"

The effort to subdue the human love to the divine, triumphed in the midst of tears.

By-and-by she rose up, and with streaming eyes and clasped hands, turned toward the Minister and said :—

“I am ready, Mr. Wellon ! Let us go ! God’s will be done !”

She stooped once more ; looked with intense love and sorrow at the face, wiped her tears from the cold features, covered them again, carefully, and turned her face toward the rest of the way, homeward.

The constable made a gesture to Jesse Hill and young Mr. Urston, and the horse was again harnessed to the slide. The Minister, leading his horse, (which had been brought so far on the return, by one of the young men,) came to Mrs. Barrè’s side and took her arm in his. He begged her to allow herself to be lifted to the saddle, and to ride. Skipper George, also, had come forward to suggest the same thing.

“It is’n fittun the lady should walk home, sir,” said he to the Minister, apart.

Mrs. Barrè heard and understood, and answered :—

“Would it make the load too heavy—?—” she finished with a longing look the sentence which was not finished with words.

The fishermen at first hesitated at the thought of her going upon the sledge that bore her husband’s corpse.

“It wouldn’t be too *heavy* ;” one of them said ; and as if no objection could be made, she went, and, putting her arm tenderly underneath, lifted the body, seated herself upon the bier, taking the muffled head in her lap, and bent over it, lost to all things else.

All other arrangements for riding and walking having been quietly made, the procession again set forward towards home faster than before. The snow, at times,

fell fast; but in about an hour more they were descending the high hill into Castle-Bay; and before them lay the great, black sea, with its cold bordering of white.

They passed along the chilly beach. At one point, whether consciously or unconsciously, Mrs. Barrè lifted her head and looked toward both sea and land. On the landward side stretched a little valley, with a knoll and rock, and tree at its northern edge; a sweet spot in summer, but now lonely and desolate. She gave a sort of cry, and turned from the sight.

"O my God, thou knowest!" she could be heard to say, sobbing over her husband's body; and she looked up no more until, in another hour, with the cold stars and drifting clouds over head, they had reached her desolate house.

"My dear brethren," said the Minister, "we have not lost our Sunday; let us close this day with prayer!"

He and all the men stood, heedless of the wintry wind, before God, and he said:—

"We thank Thee, O Merciful Father, that Thou hast given to us this, our brother's body, to lay in our hallowed ground; but, above all, for the hope that his soul, washed in the blood of the immaculate Lamb who was slain to take away the sins of the world, has been presented without spot before Thee. Give our sister, we beseech Thee, strength and peace; have her and us in Thy safe-keeping, and bring us to Thy heavenly house, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

"Amen!" "Amen!" said the people; and even from the quivering lips of her who was sorrowfully holding the head of her dead husband, there came to the ears of those nearest, a broken "Amen!"

The congregation having been dismissed with the Blessing, the Minister and the chief men reverently carried the body into the parlor, and disposed it there, amid the memorials of happy former years, and arranged a watch. Coming away, they left the wind blowing cold against the house on the outside ; but sacred silence within.



CHAPTER LXIII.

FATHER TERENCE, TO THE LAST.

NOW Mrs. Barrè passed the three days in the house with her dead husband's body, need not be told, if we could tell it. The burying-day came, and it was bright,—there was no cloud. People gathered from every quarter. All the Church-clergy of the Bay were there, and the Wesleyan ministers:—there are no others but Roman Catholics. When the procession began to form from the church, a murmur went through the multitude; there stood one figure alone outside of the array. All who were near drew back and left an open space for him; but he gave no heed to it. This was Father Terence.

He followed the procession, and, staying without the inclosure, stood devoutly during the burial of the dead. When the service was all done, and the crowd were slowly moving away, he went down the hill alone and departed.

The Minister was for sometime in the churchyard, and afterwards a little while in the church; and when at length he went sadly homeward, as he passed Mrs. Barrè's house, he turned aside and entered.

"She's at my aunt's," said Miss Dare; and then silently put into the Minister's hand a written paper. It

was entitled, "Copy of a hymn in Mr. De Brie's writing, found on his person, and dated on the night before his last journey." It read thus :—

"TO GOD MOST HIGH.

"O, my God, I have but Thee!
Earthly friends are faint and few;
To myself I am not true;
Yet, my Lord, Thou lovest me.

I am poor, and have no more;
But Thy love is in my heart;
Earth shall never tear apart
That which is my hidden store.

Many, many doubts and fears,
I have many woes and cares;
But Thou comest at unawares,
And I see Thee through my tears.

I would never be my own,
Nor on friends my heart-strings twine;
I do seek to be but Thine,
And to love but Thee alone.

Jesus! while Thy cross I see,
Though my heart do bleed with wo,
By those blessed streams I know
Blood of Thine was shed for me.

O, my Lord! Be Thou my guide;
Let me hold Thee by the hand;
Then, in drear and barren land,
I will seek no friend beside."

Mr. Wellon held the paper long;—that was the last utterance, to which men were privy, of the heart that was now dead, unless these words, in his wife's prayer-book which he had with him, were written later: "I have found rest!"

"Yes!" said the Minister. Then, thoughtfully, to himself, "Was this the 'Fate,' then, that he spoke of?—And how is she?" he asked of Miss Dare.

"Bent down, at first; but she'll stand up again bravely by-and-by."

"This is no tragedy to her," said the Minister.

"No; it's a triumph, rather," Miss Dare answered.



CHAPTER LXIV.

MRS. BARRE AFTERWARDS.

MRS. BARRE lived on, nobly, where the noblest part of her life had been, and saw Mary, (grown to womanhood,) like herself, the happy wife of a young priest. She lived on nobly.

Once, on a pleasant summer's day, after no wasting, or weakening, or dependence, when her time came, her life went out as a star is lost in the day.

She laid herself down at evening; bid her maids stay with her a little while; by-and-by sent quietly for the Minister; joined with her voice in the Church-prayers; lay still, with soft breathing, (and the other Christians,—priestly and lay, simple and gentle,—breathed softly by her bedside, while the sound of waves breaking upon the far-off sand came in, and moonlight and shade lay calmly side by side out of doors, and dew fell calmly;) once opened her eyes upward, saying, through the stillness, "Yes!" as if in answer; turned, partly, with a bright smile, to her friends; then shut the lids down softly for the last time, and so, with a fair veil of smile hung over the dead features, left her body there to be put away, until it shall be raised, in new beauty, to walk upon The New Earth.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE END OF ALL.



WE must add something for the reader's sake. Of course young Mr. Urston married Skipper George's daughter in due time. He first went up to St. John's as a Protestant, and, finishing his studies, was ordained in Halifax to the ministry of the Church. He served his deaconate in the capital, and when advanced to the priesthood, was appointed to the mission at Castle-Bay, within sight of his father's house; and a fine fellow he proved to be. His wife, as the reader will believe, was not a whit unworthy of him.

Father Terence was said to be a good deal changed, in the last years of his life; having become more silent and reserved. Some Roman Catholics, who were ill-satisfied with his tolerant and kindly spirit, gave him the name of the "Protestant Priest." Indeed, an assistant came down to him of quite another sort from himself. Yet he kept about his quiet way of life, beloved by the great body of his people, until his death.

Fanny Dare was married happily to one between whom and herself an engagement had been formed several years before, but broken up for a time, or clouded over, by things and persons in no way affecting their mutual love.

A letter to Mr. Wellon from the midst of a bridal tour on the Continent, described an incident which may interest the reader.

In entering her carriage at Civita Vecchia, she was struck, without knowing why, by the appearance of a person in the dress of an *avvocato*, who was bestowing most animated attentions upon an English clergyman and his wife just alighted, to whose party he seemed to belong. Seeing her eyes fixed upon him, he lifted his hat, with a grave courtesy, bowed, and turned away; but she had already recognized, not the voice only, but the features of one whom she had before both seen and heard in Newfoundland, as Father Nicholas.

She saw the same man, playing the same part, afterward, in Rome; and from the best information that she could get, in answer to careful inquiries in both places, believed him to be an agent in the pay of the pontifical police.











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